"Singular Devices"

The 'Trade Reliefs' of San Marco and the Iconography of Everyday Life in Medieval Venice

Thea Dioné Stevens

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University of Glasgow
Department of History of Art

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Synopsis

In this study, I examine the 'Trade Reliefs' of the main portal at San Marco and the related cycle of the theme of urban work, the Piazzetta column base sculptures, in the light of three chief factors: their possible dating, the issue of their patronage and the conceptual climate that surrounded their production in thirteenth-century Venice.

In Chapter One, I establish that the historical and formal context for the 'Trade Reliefs' and the Piazzetta column bases was the ambitious campaign of civic works undertaken at the basilica and in the *Insula Sancti Marci* in the course of the duecento. Proposing that both cycles depict Venice's trade guilds, the *arti*, I analyse the various strategies scholars have used to interpret the presence of their images in the *Insula Sancti Marci*, notably the notion of the value of manual work to the redemptive process and also what I dub the 'arti argument': the idea that the guilds directly commissioned their representation in stone at San Marco and the Piazzetta. I also underline that a comparison with other monumental medieval cycles of the iconography of urban work can only be made in form, not in meaning, and as such I conclude that the key to the reading and interpretation of both sets of sculptures is represented by the particular selection of trades and artisan activities they depict.

In Chapter Two, I consider the problem of the date of the 'Trade Reliefs' in relation to that of the main portal as a whole. I substantially revise the *termini post* and *ante quem* art historians have used to define the latter's chronological span, and I strongly question the value of the purported connection between the Venetian Labours cycle and that executed by the sculptor Radovan in Trogir. I then set out modified criteria for the consideration of the main portal, resituating the start of works in the 1210s or early-1220s and their end by 1261. In these terms, I mark a departure from existing

scholarship by suggesting that the 'Trade Reliefs' could be dated to the early- to mid-1250s, and I also propose that Piazzetta column bases were produced a decade or so later, thus placing both cycles within the dogado of Ranier Zeno.

In Chapter Three, I outline the regulation to which trade and manufacture were subject in medieval Venice, especially in reference to the statutes of the guilds, in order to establish the worth of the '*arti* argument' for the analysis of the 'Trade Reliefs' and Piazzetta column bases. Given the close regulation to which they were subject, I propose that while the guilds were not oppressed, their affairs were placed in strict relation to the state, which in the course of the thirteenth century was in process of implementing a defining model of strict political control. I cite recent historical analysis that supports such a construct, particularly the reading that events that led up to significant revisions to the guild oath in the 1270s demonstrate the governmental perception that the political status quo was under threat, and this also from within the working population. In these terms, I conclude that the guildsmen did not directly commission the 'Trade Reliefs' and Piazzetta column bases since the state emphasis on regulation was expressly designed to prevent autonomy of action within the civic collective.

In Chapter Four, I propose that the question of the patronage of the 'Trade Reliefs' and Piazzetta column bases must be analysed in relation to the procurators of San Marco, the governmental officials who organised the workings and funding of the activities of the opus, a remit that extended to the *Insula Sancti Marci* as a whole. I firmly connect the role of the procurators to trade and commerce, especially in their gathering of funds for works in and around San Marco from rents from tradesmen in the area under their immediate control, and I suggest that the inclusion of some of the activities in question in the 'Trade Reliefs' and Piazzetta column bases constituted a politic recognition of the process. I also examine the case of the artisan activities depicted at the main portal

that cannot be so specifically linked to the notion of trade within the *Insula*, proposing that their inclusion can be equally be interpreted as a form of symbolic recognition, this time of the established tradition of certain workers and artisans having to undertake obliged work for the benefit of the state. In these terms, I conclude that the procurators of San Marco commissioned the 'Trade Reliefs' and Piazzetta column bases in their role as the executors of governmental policy at the *opus*; and in the case of the 'Trade Reliefs', whether or not the former were planned from the portal's inception or in Ranier Zeno's dogado, I argue that the considerations underlying the cycle were present within the political trajectory in the period during and surrounding their production.

In the fifth and final chapter, I place the 'Trade Reliefs' and the Piazzetta column bases within the context of the fashioning of visual politics in the *Insula Sancti Marci* in the duecento. I consider the implications of previous interpretations of the decoration of San Marco as a politically-motivated programme of works, proposing that the display of *spolia* such as the Quadriga and the deliberate evocation of early Christian and Roman models at both the basilica itself and in the *Insula* as a whole can be read as the proclamation of a triumphalist message in the aftermath of the Fourth Crusade. I also analyse the emphasis placed on the imagery of civic justice, and by citing the inclusion of lion protome heads in the 'Trade Reliefs' I link this concept to their overall meaning, proposing that the latter should be read as not merely eschatological but also a direct statement of the workings of the state-led civic collective. I conclude, therefore, that the case of the 'Trade Reliefs' and Piazzetta column sculptures presents us with a paradigm of visual propaganda in which the state enforced the values of the civic collective, and that in both cycles of the iconography of everyday life the dialectic between ideal and real become is mirrored by that between subject and subjectified.

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Contents

List of Illustrations

Fig.17. Venice, San Marco, West Façade, Main Portal, Intrados of Second Archivolt, Marble Relief Slab: November (reproduction: Tigler 1995, 2, p.146 fig.147)

Fig.18. Venice, San Marco, West Façade, Main Portal, Intrados of Second Archivolt, Marble Relief Slab: December (reproduction: Tigler 1995, 2, p.147 fig.148)

Fig.19. Venice, San Marco, West Façade, Main Portal, Extrados of Second Archivolt, Marble Relief Slab: Compunction (reproduction: Tigler 1995, 2, p.153 fig.152)

Fig.20. Venice, San Marco, West Façade, Main Portal, Extrados of Second Archivolt, Marble Relief Slab: Fortitude (reproduction: Tigler 1995, 2, p.165 fig.163b)

Fig.21. Venice, San Marco, West Façade, Main Portal, Extrados of Third Archivolt, Marble Relief Slab: Sibyl (reproduction: Tigler 1995, 2, p.190 fig.184)

Fig.22. Venice, San Marco, West Façade, Main Portal, Extrados of Third Archivolt: Prophet (reproduction: Tigler 1995, 2, p.195 fig.189)

Fig.23. Venice, San Marco, West Façade, Main Portal, Intrados of Third Archivolt, Marble Relief Slab: 'Proto' (reproduction: Tigler 1995, 2, p.165 fig.164)

Fig.24. Venice, San Marco, West Façade, Main Portal, Intrados of Third Archivolt, Marble Relief Slab: Caulkers and Shipwrights (calafati and marangoni da nave/carpentieri da nave/falegnami da nave) (reproduction: Tigler 1995, 2, p.170 fig.165)

Fig.25. Venice, San Marco, West Façade, Main Portal, Intrados of Third Archivolt, Marble Relief Slab: Vintners (vinai or travasadori/portadori de vin) (reproduction: Tigler 1995, 2, p.171 fig.166)

Fig.26. Venice, San Marco, West Façade, Main Portal, Intrados of Third Archivolt, Marble Relief Slab: Bread Sellers and Fishmongers (panattaroli and pescivendoli) (reproduction: Tigler 1995, 2, p.172 fig.167)

Fig.27. Venice, San Marco, West Façade, Main Portal, Intrados of Third Archivolt, Marble Relief Slab: Butchers and Oil and Fat Sellers (macellai/becheri and ternieri) (reproduction: Tigler 1995, 2, p.173 fig.168)

Fig.28. Venice, San Marco, West Façade, Main Portal, Intrados of Third Archivolt, Marble Relief Slab: Dairy Sellers (pestrineri/lattai) (reproduction: Tigler 1995, 2, p.174 fig.169)

Fig.29. Venice, San Marco, West Façade, Main Portal, Intrados of Third Archivolt, Marble Relief Slab: Builders (muratori/murери) (reproduction: Tigler 1995, 2, p.175 fig.170)

Fig.30. Venice, San Marco, West Façade, Main Portal, Intrados of Third Archivolt, Marble Relief Slab: Agnus dei (reproduction: Tigler 1995, 2, p.176 fig.171)

Fig.31. Venice, San Marco, West Façade, Main Portal, Intrados of Third Archivolt, Marble Relief Slab: Cobblers (calzolai/calegheri) (reproduction: Tigler 1995, 2, p.177 fig.172)

Fig.32. Venice, San Marco, West Façade, Main Portal, Intrados of Third Archivolt, Marble Relief Slab: Barbers and Dentists (barbieri e dentisti) (reproduction: Tigler 1995, 2, p.178 fig.173)

Fig.33. Venice, San Marco, West Façade, Main Portal, Intrados of Third Archivolt, Marble Relief Slab: Coopers and Barrel hoop makers (bottai/botteri and cerchai/cerchieri) (reproduction: Tigler 1995, 2, p.179 fig.174)

Fig.34. Venice, San Marco, West Façade, Main Portal, Intrados of Third Archivolt, Marble Relief Slab: Carpenters (magistrorum domorum/marangoni da casa/falegnami) (reproduction: Tigler 1995, 2, p.180 fig.175)

Fig.35. Venice, San Marco, West Façade, Main Portal, Intrados of Third Archivolt, Marble Relief Slab: Sawyers (segadori) (reproduction: Tigler 1995, 2, p.181 fig.176)

Fig.36. Venice, San Marco, West Façade, Main Portal, Intrados of Third Archivolt, Marble Relief Slab: Blacksmiths (fabbri) (reproduction: Tigler 1995, 2, p.182 fig.177)

Fig.37. Venice, San Marco, West Façade, Main Portal, Intrados of Third Archivolt, Marble Relief Slab: Fishermen (pescatori) (reproduction: Tigler 1995, 2, p.183 fig.178)

Fig.38. Venice, Piazzetta, Columns (photograph: author)

Fig.39. Venice, Piazzetta, Column of St. Theodore, Column Base, Carving in Istrian Stone: Blacksmiths (fabbri) (photograph: author)

Fig.40. Venice, Piazzetta, Column of St. Theodore, Column Base, Carving in Istrian Stone: Fishmongers (pescivendoli) (photograph: author)

Fig.41. Venice, Piazzetta, Column of St. Theodore, Column Base, Carving in Istrian Stone: Bread Sellers (panattaroli) (photograph: author)

Fig.42. Venice, Piazzetta, Column of St. Theodore, Column Base, Carving in Istrian Stone: Vintners or Dairy Sellers (vinai or pestrineri/lattai) (photograph: author)

Fig.43. Venice, Piazzetta, Column of St. Mark, Column Base, Carving in Istrian Stone: Fruit and Vegetable Sellers (erbaroli) (photograph: author)

Fig.44. Venice, Piazzetta, Column of St. Mark, Column Base, Carving in Istrian Stone: Butchers (macellai/becheri) (photograph: author)

Fig.45. Venice, Piazzetta, Column of St. Mark, Column Base, Carving in Istrian Stone: Unidentifiable Trade (animal sellers?) (photograph: author)

Fig.46. Venice, Piazzetta, Column of St. Mark, Column Base, Carving in Istrian Stone: Unidentifiable Trade (photograph: author)

Fig.47. Piacenza, Cathedral, Nave, Marble Relief Slab on Pier: Bakers (Photograph: Andy Stark)

Fig.48. Piacenza, Cathedral, Nave, Marble Relief Slab on Pier: Dyer (Ugo Tinctor) (Photograph: Andy Stark)

Fig.49. Piacenza, Cathedral, Nave, Marble Relief Slab on Pier: Wheelwright (Iohannes Cacainsolario) (Photograph: Andy Stark)

Fig.50. Piacenza, Cathedral, Nave, Marble Relief Slab on Pier: Drapers (Photograph: Andy Stark)

Fig.51. Piacenza, Cathedral, Nave, Marble Relief Slab on Pier: Cobblers (Photograph: Andy Stark)

Fig.52. Piacenza, Cathedral, Nave, Pier, Marble Relief Slab: Cordwainers (Photograph: Andy Stark)

Fig.53. Piacenza, Cathedral, Nave, Pier, Marble Relief Slab: Furriers (Photograph: Andy Stark)

Fig.54. Piacenza, Cathedral, Nave, Pier, Marble Relief Slab: Donor Couple (Photograph: Andy Stark)

Fig.55. Lodi, Cathedral, Nave, Pier, Marble Relief Slab: Donor Couple (Photograph: Andy Stark)

Fig.56. Piacenza, Cathedral, Nave/Transept, Pier, Marble Relief Slab: Pilgrim (Photograph: Andy Stark)

Fig.57. Chartres, Cathedral, Window of St. James Bay 73, Stained Glass: Wool Merchants (reproduction: Williams 1997, fig.73)

Fig.58. Chartres, Cathedral, Window of St. Lubinus Bay 63 panel 1, Stained Glass: Wine Crying (reproduction: Williams 1997, fig.96)

Fig.59. Trogir, Cathedral, Main Façade, Main Portal, Right Pilaster, Marble Relief Slab: March (photograph Andy Stark)

Fig.60. Venice, San Marco, West Façade, Main Portal, Intrados of Second Archivolt, Marble Relief Slab: March (photograph Andy Stark)

Fig.61. Trogir, Cathedral, Main Façade, Main Portal, Lunette, Marble Relief: Nativity (photograph Andy Stark)

Fig.62. Trogir, Cathedral, Main Façade, Main Portal, Left Pilaster, Marble Relief Slab: January, February (photograph Andy Stark)

Fig.63. Trogir, Cathedral, Main Façade, Main Portal, Right Pilaster, Marble Relief Slab: March, April (photograph Andy Stark)

Fig.64. Trogir, Cathedral, Main Façade, Main Portal, Lunette Archivolt, Marble Relief Slab: Dream of Joseph (photograph Andy Stark)

Fig.65. Venice, San Marco, North Façade, Porta dei Fiori, Marble Relief: Nativity and Spandrel Angels (Tigler 1995, 2, p.48 fig.33)

Fig.66. Trogir, Cathedral, Main Façade, Main Portal, Left Columnette, Marble Relief: Inhabited Frieze (photograph Andy Stark)

Fig.67. Venice, San Marco, Interior, Crossing, Free-Standing Marble Sculptures: Angels (reproduction: Demus 1960, pl.31)

Fig.68. Trogir, Cathedral, Main Façade, Main Portal, Far Left Pilaster, Marble Relief Slab: Evangelists (reproduction: Fisković 1951, fig.45)

Fig.69. Venice, San Marco, Interior, South Aisle, Marble Sculptures: Protome Heads (reproduction: Demus 1960, pl.76)

Fig.70. Venice, San Marco, West Façade, Porta Sant'Alipio: Lunette Mosaic (reproduction: Howard 2000, p.100 fig.111)

Fig.71a.Ferrara, Museo della Cattedrale, Marble Relief Slab: March (reproduction: Museo della Cattedrale di Ferrara, photo P.Mongini, printer R.Selmi)

Fig.71b.Parma, Baptistery, Interior, Marble Relief Slab: March (reproduction: Parma Cathedral, Museo dell'Opera)

Fig.72. Venice, San Marco, West Façade, Main Portal, Lunette Niche, Free-Standing Marble Sculpture: Dream of Joseph (reproduction: Tigler 1995, 2, p.113 fig.116)

Fig.73. Venice, San Marco, Interior, South Transept, Mosaic: Apparitio of St. Mark (reproduction: Howard 2000, fig.77)

Fig.74. Herzog August Bibliothek, Cod.Guelf.61.2 Augusteus 4o (Musterbuch of Wolfenbüttel), fol.89r: The Evangelists John and Matthew (reproduction: Jacoff 1997, fig.41)

Fig.75. Trogir, Cathedral, Main Façade, Main Portal, Lunette Archivolt, Marble Relief Slab: Annunciate Virgin (photograph Andy Stark)

Fig.76. Trogir, Cathedral, Main Façade, Main Portal, Marble Sculpture: Left Telamon (photograph Andy Stark)

Fig.77. Trogir, Cathedral, Main Façade, Main Portal, Lunette Archivolt, Marble Relief Slab: Angels (photograph Andy Stark)

Fig.78. Chartres, Cathedral, North Transept, Left Portal, Tympanum, Marble Relief: Nativity (reproduction: Sauerländer 1972, fig.6)

Fig.79. Amiens, Cathedral, West Portal, Left Doorway, Socle of the Right Jamb: Zodiac and Calendar (reproduction: Kraus 1967, p.107 fig.78)

Fig.80. Parma, Baptistery, Tympanum, Marble Relief Slab: Annunciate Virgin (reproduction: De Francovich 1952, II, tav.170 fig.284)

Fig.81. Trogir, Cathedral, Interior, Ciborium, Marble Sculpture: Angel (reproduction: Fisković 1951, fig.56)

Fig.82. Biblioteca Marciana, Ms.BM gr. Z 540 (Marcian Evangeliary), fol.3v: March, April, May (reproduction: Foto Toso, L/90-L/95, lastra neg mm.13x18)

Fig.83a.Venice, San Marco, West Façade, Upper Level, Marble Relief: St. George (reproduction: Tigler 1995, 2, p.88 fig.88)

Fig.83b.Venice, San Marco, West Façade, Upper Level, Marble Relief: St. Demetrius (reproduction: Tigler 1995, 2, p.89 fig.89)

Fig.84. Dijon, Bibliothèque Municipale, Ms.448, fol.80r.: Rose des Vents (reproduction: Obrist 1997, fig.28)

Fig.85. Piacenza, Cathedral, Main Façade, Main Portal, Marble Relief Slab: Auster (photograph: Andy Stark)

Fig.86. Vienna, Österreischische National Bibliothek, Ms.cod.378, fol.1v: Rose des Vents (reproduction: Obrist 1997, fig.34)

Fig.87. Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Ms.Barb.lat.2154 (Copy of Chronograph of 354), fol.18: March (reproduction: Salzman 1990, fig.18)

Fig.88. Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Ms.Barb.lat.2154 (Copy of Chronograph of 354), fol.9: Mars (reproduction: Salzman 1990 fig.9)

Fig.89. Argos, Villa of the Hunter, Floor Mosaic: March (reproduction: Äkerström-Hougen 1974, fig.90)

Fig.90. Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Ms.Vat.gr.1291 (Vatican Ptolemy) fol.9r: Months (reproduction: Kenton 1974, fig.15)

Fig.91. Boulogne-sur-Mer, Bibliothèque Municipale, Ms.188 fol.30r: Planisphere (reproduction: Webster 1938, tav.XIII plate 27

Fig.92. Vienna, Österreischische National Bibliothek, Ms.Cod.387, f.90v: Vienna Calendar (reproduction: Rasetti 1933, fig.67))

Fig.93. British Library, Ms.Landsdowne 383 (Shaftesbury Psalter) fol.4: March (reproduction: Pressouyre 1965, p.461)

Fig.94. Moscow Historical Museum, Ms.Add.Gr.129 (Chludov Psalter), fol.35v: Patriarch Iannis and Demon (reproduction: Grabar 1957, p.155)

Fig.95. Gerona, Cathedral, Creation Tapestry: March (reproduction: Capítol Catedral, printer Palahí)

Fig.96. Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Ms.Vat.Lat.4363, fol.110r: March (reproduction: Pressouyre 1965, p.449)

Fig.97. Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Ms.Vat.reg.lat.1283 fol.28v: Sphere of Mars (reproduction: Panofsky 1939, fig.45)

Fig.98. Chartres Cathedral, Choir Screen, Marble Relief: Nativity (reproduction: Williamson 1995, p.46 fig.65)

Fig.99. Paris, Notre-Dame, West Portal, Central Doorway, Socle Jambs, Marble Reliefs: Virtues and Vices (reproduction: Sauerländer 1972, fig.151)

Fig.100.Villard de Honnecourt, sketchbook: Humility (reproduction: Williamson 1995, p.50 fig.75)

Fig.101.Strasbourg, Cathedral, South Transept, West Portal, Tympanum, Marble Relief: Death of the Virgin (reproduction: Williamson 1995, p.56 fig.81)

Fig.102.Paris, Notre-Dame, West Portal, Marble Relief: Story of Job (reproduction: Sauerländer 1999, I, fig.8)

Fig.103.Freiberg, Cathedral, Goldene Pforte, Free-Standing Marble Sculpture: Daniel (reproduction: Williamson 1995 p.86 fig.128)

Fig.104.Reims, Cathedral, External Facing, Marble Sculptures: Corbel Heads (reproduction: Sauerländer 1972, fig.257)

Fig.105.Castel del Monte, Vaulting, Marble Sculpture: Corbel Figure (reproduction: Willemson and Odenthal 1959, fig.91)

Fig.106.Workshop of Arnolfo di Cambio, Perugia, Fountain Fragment, Marble Sculpture: Male Figure (reproduction: Salvini 1959, fig.257)

Fig.107.Workshop of Nicola Pisano, Pisa Baptistery, Pinnacles, Marble Sculpture: St. John the Evangelist (reproduction: Ames-Lewis 1997, p.50 fig.14)

Fig.108.Workshop of Filippo Calendario, Venice, Ducal Palace, Portico, Marble Column Capital (reproduction of original): Blacksmith (photograph: author)

Introduction

San Marco, the 'Trade Reliefs' and the Piazzetta Column Bases

In his *Crudities*, Thomas Coryat turned a descriptive eye to the renowned visual glories of the Republic of Venice. Of these, the basilica of San Marco made a particular favourable impression on the seventeenth-century gentleman traveller. Gazing upwards at the bands of marble reliefs set on the three monumental arches of the west façade's main portal, Coryat eulogised *'that beautiful alabaster border full of imagery and other singular devices.'*[1]

The enthusiasm of Coryat's reaction to the sculptures of the main portal is certainly not misplaced. In the art-historical sense, the reliefs constitute a sophisticated crossover between the medieval tradition and that of the Italian proto-Renaissance. Even more significantly, however, they represent the finest sculptural achievement of the Venetian duecento, a period during which the façades of San Marco were progressively encased in a gleaming carapace of mosaic and stone.

In itself, in fact, the formal and iconographical complexity of the main portal could be said to encapsulate the ambition of the thirteenth-century decoration campaign as a whole; and by means of introduction, it bears detailed description. Each side of its opening has a revetment of splendid spolia marble columns with intricately carved foliate capitals. From these spring the three concentric arches: the first two frame a niche and the third and largest, which rises up to the level of the loggia and the four bronze horses of the Quadriga, encloses a mosaic of the 'Second Coming of Christ', the '*Parousia*' **(fig.1)**. While, like the other lunette mosaics, the present version of the *Parousia* dates back to a seventeenth-century restoration campaign, the evidence

[1] Coryat 1905, pp.348-349.

presented by Gentile Bellini's monumental painting of 1496, the *Procession in the Piazza San Marco* **(fig.2)**, indicates that it reprised the theme of the thirteenth-century original.[2]

It is in its sculptural decoration, however, that the main portal's scale and importance emerges. Each of the three archivolts has reliefs fixed on to both its inner face and its facing side (the intrados and extrados respectively), thus forming a total of six bands of carved decoration. The sculptures of the intrados of the first archivolt consist of mythological and allegorical representations. Between a figure of 'Oceanus' and a female personification of 'Luxury' at either end, an acanthus frieze encloses human and animal figures, some of which are in fierce combat **(fig.3)**. The theme of the struggle between man and man, man and beast, is continued on the extrados **(fig.4)**, although here we also find allegorical scenes of temptation and human influence: an elderly bearded man instructs a young male pupil **(fig.5)**, for instance, and a woman pours wine for a group of drunken men alongside a vignette of another female figure being castigated with a whip **(fig.6)**.

The intrados of the second archivolt depicts the 'Labours of the Months'. In 'January' a man chops wood **(fig.7)**; in 'February' **(fig.8)** a bearded man warms himself at a fire; in 'March', a nude horn-blower blasts the adjacent figure of a warrior with a gust of wind from a trumpet **(fig.9)**. 'April' is represented by a shepherd **(fig.10)**; 'May' by a man garlanded by two female flower bearers **(fig.11)**. 'June' threshes **(fig.12)**; 'July' reaps **(fig.13)**; 'August' fans himself in the claustrophobic heat of the Venetian summer **(fig.14)**. 'September' sows **(fig.15)**; 'October' gathers grapes **(fig.16)**; 'November'

[2] As well as the seventeenth-century campaign, which iconographically if not formally reprised the thirteenth-century originals, an earlier restoration of the lunette mosaics may have occurred. The chronicle of Pietro Dolfin, for instance, reports that the original mosaic 'appresso al volto della porta granda della Giesia di San Marco' was damaged by fire in 1419. *Cronaca di Pietro Dolfin detta "Dolfina"*, MC, *Raccolta Cicogna*, cod.2610, t.3, c.720. Cited as doc.847 in Cecchetti 1886, p.213.

hunts birds **(fig.17)**; and in 'December' a man is engaged with the seasonal task of pig killing **(fig.18)**. The outer face of this archivolt shows the 'Virtues and Beatitudes', female figures in softly draped robes who sway with arms aloft; they bear identifying cartouches, most of which are now illegible **(figs.19, 20)**. A similar set of figures is depicted on the extrados of the third and final archivolt, but here the subject is a series of 'Prophets and Sibyls', each of which once more holds a cartouche **(figs.21, 22)**; they alternate with intricate vegetative bosses and on the keystone there is a clipeus of 'Christ Emanuel.'

If these five bands of reliefs were analysed alone, there would be little need to remark on the unusualness of the decoration of the main portal of San Marco, for as Otto Demus points out, their themes do not substantially depart from the monumental sculptural programmes of the Île-de-France, Lombardy and Emilia-Romagna.[3] Yet the third archivolt's intrados displays a set of reliefs that are utterly removed from these precedents **(figs.23-37)**. Of its fifteen sculptures, thirteen show what could be defined as the iconography of everyday urban life in medieval Venice: the trades and artisan activities that took place within the medieval city. Ships are shown under construction; wine is poured from barrels and cheese portioned off; bread is traded; animal carcasses are carried and butchered; barrels are made and shoes shaped on lasts. Teeth are pulled and a beard shaved; an anvil hammered and fish speared from a boat in a lagoon.

These works, which are generally termed as the 'Trade' or 'Mestieri Reliefs', constitute, as Colla puts it, 'la più completa…rappresentazione dei mestieri nella scultura medievale.'[4] Yet as we shall see in this study, their interpretation remains a conundrum. Were they commissioned, as art historians generally attest, by those they depict: the tradesmen and artisans of the thirteenth-century

[3] Demus 1995, pp.16-17; Demus 1960, pp.146-149 and 149 n.93.
[4] Colla 1987, p.434

Republic? Do they indeed present a mirror of the "reality" of their subjects? Or do they instead represent an idealised reflection of a city renowned for the potency of its own internalised mythologising?

At this juncture, it is crucial to underline that the 'Trade Reliefs' are not the only cycle of the iconography of urban work executed in the *Insula Sancti Marci*, the area constituted by the Piazza – the *brolio* – and the Piazzetta, the extension to the latter that connected the basilica to the lagoon's edge at the Molo. In the Piazzetta, in fact, we find the two huge columns **(fig.38)** topped with bronze statues of Venice's patron saints, Mark the Evangelist and Theodore, which thus function as a ceremonial frame to the entry point into the *Insula* from the sea. Most significant for our purposes, though, is the fact that the square bases of the columns display carvings at each of their four corners, forming a total of eight sculptures almost in the round **(figs.39-46)**. While the lagoon's salty atmosphere, pollution and pigeon droppings have all taken their toll on the carvings – a situation that recent conservation has fortunately managed to stabilise if not rectify – each can just be made out to depict two human figures together with attributes that frame the subject of the cycle as Venice's traders and artisans.[5] Here, then, four key questions can be posed. When was each cycle created? Why was the theme of urban work judged to be so important as to be displayed both at the Piazzetta and on the main portal of the basilica of San Marco? Who – and what – motivated their creation?

This, in fact, is the enquiry that will drive the following study, and in it I will examine the 'Trade Reliefs' and the Piazzetta column sculptures in the light of three chief factors: their possible dating, the issue of their patronage and the conceptual climate that surrounded their production in thirteenth-century Venice.

[5] For the conservation of the Piazzetta column bases, see Tigler 1999-2000, p.9.

In Chapter One, I will establish the parameters for the discussion. Firstly, I will set out a historical and formal context for the 'Trade Reliefs' and the Piazzetta column bases by presenting the overall lineaments of the campaign of works undertaken at the basilica and in the *Insula Sancti Marci* in the course of the duecento. I will then propose an identification of the various trades and artisan activities within the two cycles, itself a thorny problem, and also propose definitions as to what they actually depict: individualised practitioners, or one of the two main expressions of the collective phenomenon in medieval Venice, the trade guilds known as the *arti*, or alternatively the religious confraternities termed as the *scuole di devozione*. Next, I will outline a *fortuna critica* of the interpretation of the iconography of urban work at San Marco and pinpoint the methodological problems presented by these theories. I will also examine the analogies scholars have drawn between the 'Trade Reliefs' of Venice and the few other monumental examples of the theme, notably the carved *formelle* of Piacenza Cathedral and the 'Trade Windows' of Chartres, to determine the extent to which the comparison can be useful, or whether, in fact, caution needs to be exerted.

In Chapter Two, I will place the issue of the date of the 'Trade Reliefs' within the problem of the chronology of the main portal as a whole. First, I will outline the sequence in which its sculptural decoration was undertaken and the *termini post* and *ante quem* art historians have used to establish the start, end and an approximate mid point of the works, describing the various ways in which these lynchpins have been used to give an overall dating span. Here the most crucial question, though, is the reliability of these *termini*, and I will place particular focus on the purported connection between the Venetian Labours cycle and that executed by the sculptor Radovan at the Cathedral of Trogir in Croatia. I will then set out modified criteria for the consideration of the main portal's chronology and analyse the stylistic evidence to pinpoint the most probable date for the 'Trade Reliefs' themselves. Finally I will turn to the case of the

Piazzetta column bases to establish whether dating parallels can be drawn between the two cycles.

In Chapter Three, I will examine the circumstances of the medieval trade collectives in order to establish whether or not the 'Trade Reliefs' were likely to have been directly commissioned by the workers and artisans they depict. With reference to contemporary or near-contemporary documentation, in particular the statutes of the trade guilds, I will analyse the way in which domestic trade and commerce were enacted in the medieval city, and describe the nature of the regulatory structure to which the thirteenth-century *arti* were subjected, thus establishing whether, within the limiting nature of the civic collective, they had sufficient political weight to commission their self-portraits, as it were, at the chief state shrine.

In Chapter Four, I will reframe the question of the patronage of the 'Trade Reliefs' in terms of the overall mechanics of how work was commissioned and funded at the *opus* at San Marco. I will firstly outline the development of the procuratia of San Marco, the governmental office at the helm of organising every aspect of works in the *Insula Sancti Marci*. Here the principal focus will be on how the role of the procurators can be connected to trade and commerce, especially within their remit of gathering funds for the *opus* from rents devolved in the area under their immediate control. I will next examine the case of the artisan activities depicted within the 'Trade Reliefs' that cannot be so specifically linked to this process. Can the inclusion of these other subjects be interpreted in a light of similarly political considerations? In these terms, who is likely to have commissioned the 'Trade Reliefs' and Piazzetta column bases?

In the fifth and final chapter, I will place the 'Trade Reliefs' and the Piazzetta column bases within the context of the fashioning of visual politics at San Marco and in the *Insula Sancti Marci* as a whole. Here I will examine previous interpretations of the

decoration of San Marco as a politically-motivated programme of works, with particular reference to the hagiography of St. Mark the Evangelist and the display of *spolia* such as the Quadriga, and outline the conceptual implications of the deliberate evocation of early Christian and Roman models at both the basilica itself and in the *Insula* as a whole. Why was there so potent a drive to present Venice's medieval collective as a political and apostolic paradigm, as well as a model underpinned by the notion of civic justice? What was the meaning of the close dialectic between subject and subjectified?

Chapter One

The 'Trade Reliefs' and the Piazzetta Column Bases: Identifications, Interpretations and Methodologies

Introduction: Urban Iconography in Context

The 'Trade Reliefs' of San Marco and the Piazzetta column bases have been subject to a great deal of scholarly study, yet few concrete answers have been produced as to the reasons and realities informing their existence. Above all, the sculptures present a problem of interpretation: how to explain the presence of such unusual iconography in thirteenth-century Venice, not only in locations which are amongst the most symbolic of the medieval Republic but also on such a prominent scale.

What is inarguably key to the interpretation of both cycles, however, is the conceptual climate that produced them; and it is the various scholarly interpretations of their meaning within this context that will be presented in this first chapter. The setting of the sculptures, though, is also crucial. As such, in the first part of the discussion I will outline the history of San Marco and also what is known about the thirteenth-century decorative and structural works that rendered it and the *Insula Sancti Marci* Venice's ceremonial and civic centrepiece. Secondly, I will examine the matter of the identifications of the subjects of both the 'Trade Reliefs' and the Piazzetta column bases. Which trades and artisan activities are depicted, and, moreover, should we regard them as the representations of individuals, or rather of the trade guilds or the other principal type of collective in medieval Venice, the *scuole di devozione*? Thirdly, I will present a summary of the interpretative strategies art historians have applied to both cycles. What has been proposed as to their meaning and their patronage? Fourthly, I will consider whether a methodological approach can be usefully informed by other instances of the iconography of everyday urban life,

notably the relief slabs at Piacenza Cathedral and the 'Trade Windows' of Chartres. Lastly, I will propose an interpretative key for the analysis of the "Trade Reliefs' and the Piazzetta column bases: the selection of activities shown within them.

The Duecento Campaign in the Insula Sancti Marci

The decorative history of San Marco is a densely researched subject, and rightly so; for no element of its embellishment can be analysed in isolation. The basilica functioned as the palladium of the Venetian Republic: the repository for the relics of its patron saint, Mark the Evangelist, and in its role as a church of which the doge himself was *patronus et gubernator*, the chief locus of civic identity, both sacred and secular.[1]

The first incarnation of San Marco was undertaken in the ninth century as a shrine for the relics of St. Mark the Evangelist, which – according to the vast array of chronicles within the Venetian historiographical tradition – had been summarily appropriated from its tomb in Alexandria by two enterprising merchant traders.[2] After a devastating fire, the basilica was rebuilt in the late- tenth century under doge Pietro I Orseolo, only to be destroyed once more in a conflagration less than a hundred years later.[3] A third and final church was started during the dogado of Domenico Contarini in around 1063, and in 1094 it was dedicated by doge Vitale Falier.[4]

During the following two centuries, the Contarini basilica took on the lineaments by which it is still recognisable today. An ambitious programme of mosaic decoration was started under doge Ordelaffo Falier in 1104 and continued throughout the twelfth

[1] For the doge's full title of *Patronus et Verus Gubernator Ecclesia et Cappella nostra Sancti Marci*, see Muir 1981, p.261.
[2] For an outline of the *cronachista* tradition, see Brown 1984, pp.277-280.
[3] For the first and second incarnations of the basilica, see Zuliani 1994, p.21; Dorigo 1993, pp.17-36; Demus 1960, pp.64-70.
[4] Zuliani 1994, pp.24-69; Mainstone 1991, pp.123-137; Demus 1960, p.71, 75. See Zuliani 1994, pp.23-39 and 1985, pp.497-498 for a discussion of the original form of the Contarini basilica and Jacoby 1888 for drawn reconstructions.

century, encrusting the interior of the basilica in a glittering evocation of Venice's connections to the Byzantine Empire.[5] Additional construction work was also carried out both inside the basilica and in the *brolio* outside. In the early twelfth century, the southern end of the atrium was transformed into an apsed portal, the Porta da Mar, which served as the ceremonial connection between the basilica and the lagoon entrance into the *Insula*.[6] Half a century or so later, soon after Venice's constitutional structure was formalised as the *Comune veneciarium* in 1144, work started on the *campanile*, the bell tower in the Piazza.[7] Under Doge Sebastiano Ziani (1172-1178), furthermore, works were undertaken to expand the *brolio* and the Ducal Palace and possibly continued into the reigns of his successors Orio Mastropiero (1178-1192) and Enrico Dandolo (1192-1205); and it is here, in fact, that one can position one of the most crucial questions within this study: when and by whom the colossal Piazzetta columns **(fig.38)** were raised at the Molo.[8]

What is certain, though, is that of these doges it was Enrico Dandolo who set in motion the programme that defined the basilica of San Marco as Venice's ritual centrepiece: the decoration of its three external façades. That these works were by definition a campaign is given credence by the essentially political circumstances that provided their impetus. In 1202, Venice agreed to provide a fleet for the Fourth Crusade in return for the right to besiege the Dalmatian town of Zadar, which had

[5] Demus suggests that the Falier campaign involved some structural alterations, such as the closing of a number of windows in order to provide as much wall space as possible for the mosaic decoration. Demus 1960, p.87. See also Muraro 1975, p.62.
[6] For varying dates of the Porta da Mar, see Zuliani 1994, p.27; Demus 1960, p.78. In the sixteenth century the Porta da Mar was sealed and the apsed area was transformed into the Cappella Zen; as such its original disposition remains open to question. See Demus 1995, p.17; Demus 1960, p.78.
[7] For the establishment of the *Comune veneciarium* in 1143-44, see Ortalli 1998-1999, p.415; Hubach 1996, p.379; Schulz 1992-1993, p.134. For the bell-tower, see BM, *Cronaca anonima del sec XIV*, Lat.Cl.10, cod.36, c.64 t. Cited as doc.75 in Cecchetti 1886, p.9. Marcantonio Michiel's chronicle specifies that the *campanile* had its foundations struck in the tenth century under doge Pietro Tribune. but this version may well be in lines with the Venetian historiographical tradition's tendency to falsify antiquity in order to emphasise prestige. BM, *Aggiunta di Marcantonio Michiel*, Lat.Cl.10, n.185, cols.288 and 525.
[8] For a full list of the doges of Venice from the year 726 to 1400, see Norwich 1972, p.301. For the question of when the Piazzetta columns were put into place, see discussion in Chapter Two.

broken free of Venetian control.[9] According to *Les Éstoires de Venise*, the vivid historical chronicle written by Martino Da Canal in the period 1268 to 1275, Enrico Dandolo made full use of the state arsenal – established just under a century before – to 'apariller et faire chalandres et nes et galiés a planté', with the ships being finished in a remarkably short space of time.[10] But as well as successfully subjugating Zadar, the Venetians also engineered the diversion of the crusading army to Constantinople. In 1203 and then again in 1204, doge Enrico Dandolo himself led the violent sack of Venice's nominal overlord as an opportunistic act of reprisal for the political tensions that had underwritten the preceding decades.[11]

After the bloodshed came the pillaging, and it was the Venetians who took the lion's share of the booty. Huge quantities of marbles, mosaic and sculpture were shipped back to Venice; and in the course of the reigns of at least five consecutive doges – Pietro Ziani (1205-1229), Giacomo Tiepolo (1229-1249), Marino Morosini (1269-1253), Ranier Zeno (1253-1268) and Lorenzo Tiepolo (1268-1275) – the *spolia* were channelled into the project of gradually sheathing the brick walls of the Contarini structure in marble veneers and columns, mosaic, and early Christian and Byzantine relief slabs. The ambition of the programme of works, in fact, appears to have gone hand-in-hand with the desire to visually render the state's own church in a magnificence commensurate with Venice's political role in the new Latin Empire of the East. During the next half century, the decoration of the atrium, probably a work-in-progress shortly after the Fourth Crusade, was finalised in the form of the magnificent mosaic cycles showing the stories of Genesis;[12] and within that same period the four bronze horses of the Quadriga, which had been seized from

[9] For the siege of Zadar, see Hindley 2004, p.151; Seneca 1999, pp.159-160; Da Canal 1972, p.49.
[10] Da Canal 1972, p.46. See also Concina 1984, p.9; Brunello 1980-1981, p.67.
[11] For the deterioration of relations between Venice and the Byzantine Empire in the late-twelfth century, see Madden 1999; Lane 1973, pp.34-35.
[12] Zuliani 1994, p.23; Demus 1960, pp.46,77, 82. It is still debated whether the northern wing of the atrium was vaulted or created *ad novo* at this time. The *Chronica brevis* of Andrea Dandolo simply records that work was carried out under doge Marino Morosini (1249-1253). Dandolo 1941, 2, p.369. See also Bettini 1954, pp.22-30.

Constantinople's Hippodrome were placed into position on the loggia over the main portal, although as we shall see in Chapter Two, the precise date that this occurred is a matter still under debate .[13]

During the decoration campaign, furthermore, all three external faces of the basilica received new sculptural embellishment. Of the façades, the south remained essentially an open structure; yet the north was inset with relief slabs and an intricately carved doorway, the Porta dei Fiori, was constructed. The main focus for the works, though, was the west façade. The five pre-existing portals of the Contarini basilica had mosaic depictions of the life and posthumous career of St. Mark inserted into their lunettes; and the four smaller of these doorways also received carved marble reliefs. Six monumental slabs, three early Christian originals and three carved *ad novo*, were placed above the level of the loggia; and five others showing Christ and the Evangelists, which are now on the north façade, were positioned above and to either side of the four bronze horses of the Quadriga.[14]

The centrepiece of the sculptural work, though, was indisputably the main portal itself. Of its arches, the third soars to the level of the loggia and Quadriga, connecting the magnificence of the display of *spolia* with that of the new decoration below. But how would the whole have appeared to the contemporary viewer? Here our principal visual evidence is constituted by Gentile Bellini's monumental *Procession in the Piazza San Marco* **(fig.2)** of 1496, which as well as serving as an important document of the lunette mosaics prior to their seventeenth-century restoration gives us some indication of the original aspect of the sculptures of the three archivolts. Although the main portal is relatively distant in the image, one can see that the figurative elements of its reliefs were gilded, with faces and hands picked out in flesh tones and black; and in

[13] For the discussion of the chronology and significance of the placement of the Quadriga, see Chapters Two and Five.
[14] See also discussion in Chapters Two and Five.

fact the painstaking conservation campaign carried out in the 1970s at the main portal found traces of the colouring, as well as traces of a dark-red earth pigment or *bolo* in the backgrounds of the intrados slabs, and a greenish tint in those of the extrados reliefs. The scientific analysis, though, could not provide firm answers as to whether these aesthetic touches were contemporary to the reliefs' creation, or indeed whether subsequent repainting was faithful to their original state.[15] What does appear certain, however, is that the effect in the duecento would have been of considerably more vibrancy – and as such increased visibility – than the almost monochrome effect that survives today, and would have even gone beyond the effect of gleaming '*alabaster*' that so impressed Thomas Coryat.

Similar ambiguities afflict our understanding of how the portal was constructed. On one hand, the rigorous investigation of the 1970s did confirm an early supposition: that in lines with the approach followed in most medieval portal projects, the sculptures were carved *avant-pose*, and were attached to the six faces of the three archivolts as they were completed according to precise measurements. The proportions of the reliefs are, in fact, substantial. Those of the first and second archivolts are 52 centimetres wide on the intrados and a little narrower on the extrados, and those of the third arch larger – namely 59 centimetres wide on the intrados and 63 on the extrados – in lines with the fact that its carvings had to be viewed from a greater distance.[16] In the absence of contemporary documentation or more precise structural clues, however, it is difficult to know how to interpret such data. Were the reliefs put into place only when they were completed as an entire series, or band by band? And if the former, how does one tally this with a factor we

[15] For the gilding and paint in the reliefs, see Lazzarini 1995, pp.228-234; Piana 1995, pp.235-246; Lazzarini and Piana 1988, pp.162-165; Dorigo 1988, p.5. The restoration of the archivolts in fact revealed that the reliefs were probably repainted on at least two subsequent occasions, the first of which was in the mid-fourteenth century. Dorigo 1988, p.10.

[16] Lazzarini 1995, pp.228-234; Piana 1995, pp.235-246; Lazzarini and Piana 1988, pp.162-165. For the measurements, Dorigo 1988, p.5. For the *avant-pose* procedure within medieval portal projects in general, see Sauerländer 1999, 1992.

shall examine in detail in Chapter Two: that of substantial technical and stylistic development from the first band of reliefs to the sixth?

While the implications of these questions will be addressed a little later, the uncertainty of the portal's construction can be balanced with a persuasive theory: that the decoration campaign at the west façade was as a whole informed by a somewhat *ad hoc* approach. Fulvio Zuliani expresses the case as follows:

> Nella realizzazione della decorazione delle facciate di San Marco non si procedette seguendo un unico progetto originario, ma quasi a tentoni, con una serie di addattamenti successivi che comportarono modifiche di rilievo anche in opera.[17]

This notion of a "work-in-progress" is supported by additional evidence, and this from the 'Trade Reliefs' themselves. When the sculpture of the fishermen (*pescatori*) **(fig.37)** – the last of the sequence and on the lower right-hand side – was detached from the archivolt for treatment and analysis, its underside displayed clear signs of having already been carved, and while the subject could not be determined the case was suggestive enough but to lead the conservators to believe that other slabs may have been re-used in a similar manner.[18] Could this correspond with the idea of a campaign of sufficient duration to include changes and revisions? In short, while it may not be in doubt that the sculptures of the main portal were executed to precise measurements, and even though it is likely, according to Zuliani's reading, that they were then assembled on the archivolts as and when each band of reliefs had been completed, the length of the process as a whole is a matter subject to considerable discussion, as is whether its iconographical planning was a *fait accompli* prior to its inception or instead was in itself a matter of some fluidity.

[17] Zuliani 1994, p.108. See also discussion in Chapter Four.
[18] For a summary of the findings, see Dorigo 1988, pp.5-6.

The Subjects of the 'Trade Reliefs' and Piazzetta column bases

Before we can approach the problem of the chronology of the 'Trade Reliefs' and the Piazzetta column bases – and this will be the main focus of the next chapter – we must closely consider another: the identification of their subjects.

First, let us examine the 'Trade Reliefs'. Notably, the first slab (reading from left to right) does not show a scene of urban work but instead a bearded man, seated on a chair and with a pair of crutches propped against his body, raising a finger to indicate his mouth **(fig.23)**. As we shall see below, this figure has raised varying interpretations amongst art historians, but it is generally dubbed as the 'Proto' in lines with the tradition that it represents the architect of the original basilica, who had been struck dumb after proudly promising to deliver a church more beautiful than heaven itself.[19]

Above the 'Proto' we find the first of the scenes of urban work **(fig.24)**. Here four male figures are engaged in the construction of a boat, with two men, one older and bearded and one younger and clean-shaven, caulking its seams, while above them one young man carves the prow and another extracts timber from a large woven basket. The figure of the older caulker uses a small lion's head protome as a knee-support, its features creased by the pressure exerted. In these terms, the relief is generally and tenably held to represent the caulkers (*calafati*) and shipwrights (*marangoni da nave*, also known as *carpentieri da nave* or *falegnami da nave*).[20]

In the next relief, there are five male figures. A bearded man draws a liquid from a barrel into a container, with the lion protome below him; a younger man seated by the barrel drinks from a bowl, while above another holds a vessel ready to receive his portion, and two figures manhandle a vat slung onto a pole **(fig.25)**. While it is

[19] See, for example, Dorigo 1988, p.10; Demus 1960, p.90 and n.124,125.
[20] Where appropriate, I will give guild names in both the Italianised version and *veneziano*.

possible that the liquid might be water, and thus the figures water carriers, no documentation refers to such an activity in the medieval city, where each *campo* had its own artesian well. With this in mind, I would support the usual identification of the image as the vintners (*vinai* or *travasadori / portadori de vin*).

Adjacent to the vintners is the slab of the bread sellers (*panattaroli*) and the fishmongers (*pescivendoli*) **(fig.26)**. Here a bearded man is seated by a small table resting on the lion's head; the table supports a basket to hold the loaves of bread he is handing to a female figure standing alongside. The woman also holds a pair of fish, implying that she has just made a purchase from the *pescivendoli*. Above, two beardless male figures hold further baskets of loaves.

Then there are the butchers (*macellai / becheri*) **(fig.27)**, whose guild also included the related activity of the sellers of oil and fat (*ternieri*). A bearded man applies the deathblow to an ox he grasps by one of its horns, its belly squashing the leonine protome below; a ram awaits slaughter in the background. Above, another younger bearded man portions off a carcass with an axe; and a clean-shaven colleague carries another ram over his shoulders.

Next we find the dairy sellers (*pestrineri / lattai*) **(fig.28)**. The lion's head supports a large vat, from which a bearded man pours a liquid, almost certainly milk, into a jug. A customer, once more female, stands expectantly before him, holding another small jug and a bowl. Above these two figures, two young men are engaged in portioning off a round flat cheese; one cuts it into two, and the other hold a scale with a weight at its left end.

In the subsequent relief, we see the builders (*muratori / mureri*) **(fig.29)**. A young man carrying a hod of bricks scales a wooden ramp wedged onto the lion protome below.

Above, another beardless figure mortars a wall with a trowel and holds a hammer; an older bearded man applies a plumb line to the edge of the building under construction. On the archivolt's keystone alongside, there is a carving of the *Agnus dei* in a heavenly sphere supported by two busts of angels **(fig.30)**.

After the *Agnus dei* we find the cobblers (*calzolai / calegheri*) **(fig.31)**. A beardless man, his left foot conveniently propped on the ear of the lion's head, sits in front of a last on to which he has slipped leather and holds another pair of lasts at arm's length; two finished boots stand below. Above, another figure holds what appear to be callipers – although the implication could be that he is engaged in sewing leather – and an awl and a hammer hang above on the background plane.

Next to the cobblers are the barbers and dentists (*barbieri e dentisti*) **(fig.32)**. A male customer sits in a chair with his right foot wedged on top of the lion's head, and a young barber applies the shaving knife above his left ear; a pair of shears and a mirror hang above. A bearded dentist in the right hand corner of the relief wedges open his patient's mouth with his thumb as he applies a large pair of pliers to his teeth. In an appropriate descriptive detail, the client's right fist clenches in painful reaction to the extraction.

Next, we see the coopers and barrel hoop makers (*bottai / botteri* and *cerchai / cerchieri*) **(fig.33)**. A bearded male figure in a wide-brimmed hat raises a mallet as he forces on a hoop to a large barrel, using the crumpled lion protome as a footrest. Above him are two further male figures, both beardless. In the top left corner, one holds two bundles of barrel hoops; the other twists rope around a single hoop, presumably to make it ready for use on the barrel below.

Then we have the carpenters (*magistrorum domorum / marangoni da casa / falegnami*) **(fig.34)**. One bends downwards to work on a piece of timber propped alongside the lion's head, but the fact this figure is missing his arms makes it difficult to establish the precise nature of the work in which he is engaged; he does, however, hold a stick, possibly implying that it is the handle of an implement. Above him, a bearded figure applies a tool to another wooden shape, the curve of which might indicate destination for use in the shipbuilding context or as a support for a domed structure.

The theme of woodwork is continued into the next relief, where we see the sawyers (*segadori*) **(fig.35)**. Here both figures are engaged in the same task of wielding a two-man saw to split a piece of timber into two. The trestle on which the piece of wood is balanced has one leg thrust deeply onto the lion protome below, and in the right top corner a horn receptacle and some type of wrench hang from a tree-trunk into which is wedged a large axe.

The penultimate relief depicts the blacksmiths (*fabbri*) **(fig.36)**. Once more its ruinous state of preservation makes it difficult to interpret the work being carried out by the two male figures, one bearded and one clean-shaven. The former raises a hammer above his head and appears to be in the act of bringing it down onto an anvil balanced on a tree-trunk below; the latter, probably the apprentice, repeats the process, but this time with what appears to be an axe, and here too the lion's head is integrated into the composition as a foothold.

The final sculpture of the sequence **(fig.37)** is also rather damaged, but it clearly represents two fishermen (*pescatori*). One, seated in a small boat, uses a hooked line to bait fish, and while his companion lacks his arms, a forked trident just below the water line indicates that he originally held its long pole. Finally, it remains to point out

that this is the only one of the 'Trade Reliefs' not to have the supporting lion protome; instead a decorative border links the slab to the archivolt's springing.

Now let us turn to the sculptures of the Piazzetta column bases, where my own observations – which broadly if not completely correlate with those of Demus and Salvadori – have led me to identify them as follows.[21] On the four corners of the socle of the column of Saint Theodore, we firstly find the blacksmiths **(fig.39)**: two *fabbri*, one holding a raised hammer, crouch on either side of a protruding anvil. Then there are the fishmongers (*pescivendoli*) **(fig.40)**, once more two in number and squatting on either side of a large basket. Next, there appear to be two bread sellers (*panattaroli*), whose basket holds loaves of bread **(fig.41)**; and finally the vintners (*vinai*) or possibly dairy sellers (*pestrineri*) **(fig.42)**, of whom one sips from a bowl and the other holds a similar container next to a barrel.

On the column of St. Mark, the sculptures are in an even more precarious state of preservation. The first, however, appears to show two figures seated on either side of a large basket, and both are apparently engaged in the act of consuming some of their produce; arguably they could be ambulant fruit and vegetable sellers (*erbaroli*) or greengrocers (*venditori di biade e legumi*) **(fig.43)**. The next corner of the column base is occupied by an almost illegible sculpture **(fig.44)**; but on one side, we find a possible indication of a ram's head with a wavy forelock, thus suggesting that the subject is the butchers (*macellai / becheri*). A similar fate has afflicted the next work **(fig.45)**; all that is discernable is the possible presence of a knife in the central portion, and one could posit that here we have some sort of other animal sellers. The final sculpture **(fig.46)**, unfortunately, is entirely unreadable.

[21] Salvadori 1986, p.39; Demus 1960, p.118.

Identification Issues

This description of the 'Trade Reliefs' and Piazzetta column bases should have made it clear that the identification of the various activities they depict is reasonably clear if not entirely unilateral. What is less apparent, however, is the answer to the first crucial question that we could pose: do they depict individual tradesmen and artisans, or are their subjects the medieval Venetian trade guilds, the *arti*?

The composition of the images supports the latter reading, for they frame each trade and activity as one practised by a group of artisans working as a cohesive unit. On the Piazzetta column bases, for instance, each sculpture apparently shows two workers alongside the tools and products of their trade. At the main portal, on the other hand, the situation is a little more complex. As we saw above, all of the reliefs contain one older figure, denoted by a beard and sometimes a cap or hat; he is accompanied in his labours by one or more figures who are clean-shaven and apparently younger. Here, then, we might have a micro-reflection of the guild structure: the master setting the example for the younger apprentices, the *garzoni*, in the period of their training.

If we do identify the 'Trade Reliefs' as depictions of the *arti*, however, it is important, to emphasise that some of them do not show a single trade but instead one or more guilds whose activities were related. The coopers (*bottai*), for instance, had a separate *arte* to that of the barrel hoop makers (*cerchai*), yet they are placed together in the same carving; and in the case of the first sculpture in the sequence, that showing ship construction, we see both the carpenters (*maragoni da nave*), and the related profession of the caulkers (*calafati*), whose guild statutes or *capitolari* were distinct entities. In the event, though, the nature of these groupings does not preclude them being read within the guild framework. As we shall see in Chapter Four, there were clear precedents for related *arti* being permitted to collaborate amongst themselves if the requirements of their work demanded it, and indeed each guild could act as the

general umbrella under which were grouped smaller related activities, known as *colonelli*.[22] One example of this subdivision is provided by the case of the domestic carpenters, depicted, as we saw above, in a different relief slab to their shipbuilding colleagues in the arsenal and the private boatyards, the *squeri*. Their guild, as Gramigna and Perissa point out, was divided into the *marangoni da case* (house carpenters), *marangoni da noghera* (furniture makers), *marangoni da soarze* (frame makers) and *marangoni da rimesse* (makers of veneers and *intarsia*), all of whom were governed by the same overall set of rules and conventions, with the details being modulated according to the specific requirements of their professions.[23]

The identification of the subjects of the two cycles as trade guilds, however, raises the problem of how to correlate the documentation relating to the thirteenth-century *arti* with their images at San Marco and the Piazzetta. Here the chief textual resource is represented by the *capitolari*, the statutes relating to the medieval *arti* and their *colonelli*, a corpus made more accessible for historians by means of Giovanni Monticolo's monumental nineteenth-century transcription, *I Capitolari delle Arti Veneziane*.[24]

The value of Monticolo's undertaking was to put together a picture of the existence of the medieval guilds from documents dispersed throughout Venice's state archive; and what strikes one immediately is the sheer scale of the enterprise. Out of the 203 guilds that came into being in the course of the duration of the Republic, thirty-seven had their statutes registered with the presiding authority, the *giustizia*, in the period 1219 and 1278, with thirteen sets of *capitolari* being encoded in the period 1270 to 1271

[22] For the term *colonelli*, see Manno 1997, p.17. See also discussion in Chapter Four.
[23] Gramigna and Perissa 1981, p.28.
[24] Denoted in the remainder of the study as *CAV*. See also list of abbreviations in Bibliography.

alone.[25] But since the thirteenth-century corpus was subject to later revisions, which from the fourteenth century onwards tended to be in the *volgare*, and since also the original documents appear to have been often discarded in favour of later transcriptions, the exact chronology of each set of statutes is by definition difficult to establish. Yet Monticolo's achievement was to date the *capitolari* as closely as possible, and Richard Mackenney, the most prolific recent scholar of the Venetian trade guilds, has taken up this example to categorise the *arti* and their statutes into three thematic divisions: shipbuilding in the arsenal, trade and manufacture in the city as a whole, and the various bodies of officials whose competency was largely to oversee the first two categories.[26]

The chief methodological difficulty created by placing the thirteenth-century *capitolari* in relation to the 'Trade Reliefs' and Piazzetta column bases, however, is simply whether or not there is a direct relationship between them; and here the dates of the statutes are not particularly reassuring. As we shall see in Chapter Two, both cycles of sculptures can almost certainly be dated to a period before the mid-1260s; yet of the subjects of the former, for example, only the fishmongers (*pescivendoli*) and the barrel hoop makers (*cerchai*) had statutes before 1260, in 1227 and 1259 respectively. Of the other *arti* in the portal sculptures, the sawyers (*segadori*) had their *capitolari* registered in 1262, the oil and fat sellers (*ternieri*) in 1263 and the barbers (*barbieri*) in 1270; and in fact seven of the depicted guilds received their statutes only in 1271, namely the cobblers (*calzolai*), the carpenters (*falegnami / marangoni da casa*), the shipwrights (*carpentieri / marangoni da nave / falegnami da nave*), the caulkers (*calafati*), the builders (*muratori*), the smiths (*fabbri*) and the coopers (*bottai*).[27] Of the remaining *arti* in the 'Trade Reliefs', those of the butchers (*becheri*), dairy-sellers (*pestrineri*) and the vintners (*vinai*) did not appear to have statutes at all,

[25] Manno 1997, p.17. For the full list of statutes with their respective dates, see Mackenney 1997, pp.17-19; Manno 1997, p.137.
[26] Mackenney 1987, p.10.
[27] For these dates, see in particular Mackenney 1997, pp.17-19.

arguably because they were not subject to the same presiding authority, the *giustizia*; and the bread sellers (*panattaroli*) only had their statutes in 1333. If an *arte* could not be defined to be in official existence before receiving its *capitolari*, does this imply that the 'Trade Reliefs' do not depict guilds after all?

One of the chief historians of the Venetian *medioevo*, Giorgio Cracco, does indeed take the position that a worker collective could not have guild status without possessing statutes. Significantly, Cracco centres part of his argument on the 'Trade Reliefs' themselves. Firstly, he believes that the sculptures cannot be dated before 1271, for it was only in that year that more than half of the *arti* depicted within them received their statutes. Secondly, using the assumption that it was indeed the guilds that were the patrons of the cycle, Cracco suggests that it was at the point of receiving their *capitolari* – a prerogative that he believes was claimed by the *arti* themselves – that the guilds would have had 'il peso effettivo nella società veneziana' to flex their muscles as sponsors at the state shrine.[28] Both constructs are intriguing, of course, and the second will be considered a little later in the study. With regard to the first, though, Cracco's overall rationale is probably flawed, for the documentary sources suggest that the possession of *capitolari* was not a prerequisite for a formalised guild structure.

Let us examine the evidence. In a passage of his *Les Éstoires des Veneçiens*, for example, Martino Da Canal describes a procession celebrating the coronation of doge Lorenzo Tiepolo in 1268, an event in which he cites the participation of the guilds. Yet out of the eighteen he cites – and this most specifically as *arti* – only ten had received their statutes by this date.[29] To this observation can be added two others. Firstly, as Elena Favaro points out, the terms *ars* or *arte* appear from the beginning of the duecento onwards in documents predating the statutes, for example those relating

[28] Cracco 1967 p.249.
[29] Da Canal 1972, pp.284, 286. See also Dorigo 1988, p.22 n.17.

to the state arsenal.[30] Secondly, the case of the other well-known medieval Venetian associations, the *scuole di devozione*, makes it clear that decades or even centuries sometimes divided their documented establishment and the first codification of their *capitolari*.[31] Even if this were not the case, however, Cracco contradicts his own rationale by failing to consider the case of the bread sellers (*panattaroli*), who appear in 'Trade Reliefs' despite the fact that their statutes, as we saw above, were only registered in 1333. Clearly, then, the date of the 'Trade Reliefs' must be derived independently from that of the statutes of the workers and artisans they depict.

No discussion of the 'Trade Reliefs' and Piazzetta column bases can be undertaken, however, without being certain that the groups they depict *are* the trade guilds. Could they equally be said to represent *scuole di devozione*? While the first of the latter came into existence around the middle of the thirteenth century – and as such would fit into the chronology I will propose in this study for both sculptural cycles – the argument ultimately revolves around definitions.[32]

Essentially the *scuole* were confraternities that acted as a forum for social respectability, religiosity and the protection of professional interests.[33] Their activities centred on charitable action, including the support of sick and needy along with the provision of funerary rites of their own deceased *confratelli* and care of their dependants. The *scuole* also engaged in a very visible piety, taking part in the grand civic processions in which statecraft and spirituality were inextricably bound together.

[30] Favaro 1975, p.29. Even before this, certain trades were cited in nomenclature that implies a guild collective. Although he does not mention his source, Agostinelli cites a tenth-century document in which mention is made of the chest makers (*casselerei*), bell founders (*calderei*) and millers (*mugnai*). Agostinelli et al 1995, p.27. See also Gramigna and Perissa 1981, p.46

[31] Mackenney, who argues this point strongly, cites the case of the *scuola* of Santi Giuliano e Carlo, which was established in 1277 yet did not have statutes until 1559. Mackenney 2000, pp.177-178.

[32] The first reliably documented *scuola* was that of San Mattia on Murano, established in 1247. By the end of the thirteenth century another nine are documented. Mackenney 2000, pp.177, 179-181. At this early stage the *scuole* were undifferentiated between *grandi* and *piccole*. See Mackenney 2000, p.181, Gramigna and Perissa 1981, p.26, Pullan 1971, p.33.

[33] Gramigna and Perissa 1981, p.25. See also Plni 1999, p.16; Costantini 1989, pp.36-37.

Yet the overall binding factor for a *scuola* was a shared devotion to a particular patron saint or holy relic – an aspect altogether lacking in the 'Trade Reliefs' and Piazzetta column bases, where the focus is very much on a shared artisan activity or trade, which within the *scuole di devozione* was merely a demographic possibility, not a common thread.[34]

In the event, though, it is difficult to entirely disentangle the affairs of the *arti* and the *scuole*, especially since each guild appears to have had a related and dependent confraternity, the *scuola dell'arte*, for its religious devotions. In fact it is interesting to note that the existence of the latter may have pre-dated that of the guilds themselves; certainly in early documentation, the terms *ars* and *schola* appear to have been virtually synonymous.[35] Once more, though, clear delineations must be drawn. While it is likely that the artisans had to be a member of both the *arte* and its *scuola* in order to practice their trade, essentially the former existed as a functional concern to protect the interests of its members, with the latter as the forum for religious devotion.[36] In the event, though, it may be reductive to attempt to separate these two strands of the collective experience, for as Bosisio Dosio points out, in the statutes of the later thirteenth century in particular, the terminology applied to both spheres of activity, practical and religious, becomes less clear-cut.[37] Overall, though, it appears likely that in effect their artisan and tradesmen members would have made little net distinction between their activities as guildsmen and as *confratelli*.[38]

[34] There was one notable exception to this rule: the *scuola di San Nicolò*, established in 1337 by the fishmongers (*pescivendoli*) of Rialto and San Marco. See Mackenney 2000, p.181. But the fishermen of San Nicolò, the *Nicolotti*, had rituals that were rather distinct from the rest of the city, and indeed appear to have wilfully maintained a state of "otherness". See Lane 1973, p.12.

[35] Gramigna and Perissa suggest that the oldest confraternity in Venice was in fact a *scuola dell'arte*, that of the makers of sea and trousseau chests (*casselleri*) – also known as the *scuola della Purificazione* in honour of the Virgin of the Purification – that was founded in the tenth century. Gramigna and Perissa 1981, p.43. For the earliest known use of the term *scola* in a twelfth-century document, see Favaro 1975, p.11.

[36] Pullan 1971, p.98.

[37] Bonfiglio Dosio 1997, p.607.

[38] For this point, see Mackenney 1987, pp.1, 5.

The question of whether the 'Trade Reliefs' depict the guilds or their confraternities, though, is probably best considered alongside the symbolic nature of the association of St. Mark the Evangelist with the state itself. As Mackenney underlines, it is in itself significant that only one of the hundreds of the *scuole di devozione* established over the centuries – the *scuola grande di San Marco* – was dedicated to Venice's patron, and, moreover, that its seat was placed not at or near the basilica itself but next to the mendicant church of Santi Giovanni e Paolo, implying the deliberate circumscription of its activities within a sphere kept firmly separate from government-led sacrality at San Marco.[39]

It is also useful to consider that overall, the devotions of the guilds tended to be centred at their own seats of civic ritual, whether altars in churches or in buildings expressly dedicated to the purpose; and the imagery they commissioned, even in their own *capitolari*, tended to revolve around the depictions of the patron saints under whose protection they placed their activities.[40] In the 'Trade Reliefs' and Piazzetta column bases, on the other hand, the emphasis is firmly on the symbolic representation of the world of work: weights and measures, artisan practice, trading transactions. In these terms, it would seem that we can rely on the usual assumption that the sculptures do indeed depict the guilds, not the *scuole*, although the close dialectic between the two forms of the associative experience illustrates how, as Mackenney puts it, 'economic, political and religious life constantly interacted' within the medieval civic collective.[41]

[39] Mackenney 2000, pp.188-189. See also Mackenney 1987, p.159. For later guild patronage at their own ritual seats, see Humfrey and Mackenney 1986. The only confraternity that had its seat within San Marco was that of the *cappella dei Mascoli*, and its devotions appear to have been devoid of trade-related associations. See Forlati 1975, p.118.

[40] For the illuminated *capitolari* of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, the *mariegole*, see Giachery 1992-1993.

[41] Mackenney 1987, p.1

Interpretative Precedents: The Problem of the 'Trade Reliefs'

If the identification of the subjects of the 'Trade Reliefs' and Piazzetta sculptures can thus be resolved with relative certainty, a far more challenging question is how to interpret the depiction of Venice's trade guilds in the first place, and this in a position of such prominence.

Overall, scholars have concentrated their analysis on the 'Trade Reliefs', for here the problem is the most salient: how to conceptually situate these striking images of urban work within what, in many senses, is an otherwise fairly conventional church portal programme. Overall, the most frequent reading closely mirrors that usually applied to another, better-known example of the images of daily life, the 'Labours of the Months': that of the earthly journey of humankind towards heavenly redemption in the light of an ecclesiastical revaluation of the value of manual work.[42]

This approach, for instance, is taken by Demus, who argues that the interpretative key to the main portal is the subject of its lunette mosaic : the *Parousia*, the Second Coming of Christ, as set out by the Gospel of St. Matthew.[43] According to this structure, the fighting creatures and humans of the first archivolt would represent a moralising message of the fight of good against evil; the 'Labours of the Months' on the second archivolt would signify the value of manual work within the frame of man's expiation of the Original Sin; the 'Virtues and Beatitudes' would encapsulate the values needed by man to endure his earthly lot and earn passage into Paradise; and the 'Prophets and Sibyls' on the third archivolt would function as the heralds of Christ's Second Coming. In this light, Demus posits that the 'Trade Reliefs' were a deliberate variation on the Liberal Arts, the usual inclusion within what he believes to be the model for the central portal, the *Speculum mundi* cathedral portals of the Île-de-

[42] For this interpretation of the Labours of the Months, see, for example Cohen 1990; De Leo 1983; Mane 1980; Le Goff 1983; Schapiro 1941; Webster 1938.
[43] Matthew 24, 30-31. For the same citation, see also Tigler 1993, p.156.

France.[44] In these terms, the images of urban work would function as a further eschatological gloss on the overall redemptive message, with the aim being to simply position the latter within the urban context.

This line of argument has been taken up and developed by other art historians, and it is worth citing the chief theories posed to date. Antonio Niero, for example, uses Aquinas's *Summa Theologica* as the basis for proposing a connection of the theme of urban work to the 'Virtues and Beatitudes' on the extrados;[45] Lorenza Cochetti Pratesi comments on the 'grave necessità del lavoro' presented by the 'Labours of the Months', which would then be reiterated in the 'Trade Reliefs' in a manner more appropriate to the Venetian environment;[46] and Zuliani regards the cycle as an endorsement of the ideal of 'concordia sociale.'[47] Even more pertinently, Antonio Manno argues that the *Agnus dei* on the keystone of the band of reliefs functions as the 'supremo governatore degli artigiani,' and extends the *Parousia* theory by proposing that the concept of artisan labour can be specifically related to the Second Coming as set out in the Book of the Apocalypse, VII, 16-17:

> They will no longer be thirsty, or hungry, nor will the sun burn them...because the Lamb will be enthroned, He will be their shepherd, He will give them the life-giving waters, and God will wipe every tear from their eyes.[48]

It is Guido Tigler, however, who has most fully developed this vein of thought. Like Manno, he cites potential connections to the Book of the Apocalypse, stating that within this frame the choice to represent the 'Prophets and Sibyls' on the third

[44] Demus 1995, pp.16-17; Demus 1960, pp.146-149 and 149 n.93. For a famous example, the 'Liberal Arts' of Chartres (1145-55), and the tradition of the *Speculum mundi* as a whole, see Katzenellenbogen 1959, pp.15-19.
[45] Niero 1993, p.144.
[46] Cochetti Pratesi 1960, p.17. For a similar argument, see Frugoni 1997, p.895; Dorigo 1990, p.155; Colla 1987, p.434.
[47] Zuliani 1994, p.120.
[48] My translation from Manno's Italian. Manno 1997, pp.13-14.

archivolt's extrados might reflect the popularity of the so-called *Sermo* – in its full title *De symbolo contro Iudeos, paganos et Arianos* – an apocalyptic tract in circulation at the time;[49] and indeed this might tie in to the frame which Arturo Quintavalle also applies to the portal as a whole, that of an anti-heretical message in stone based on conceptual precedents such as that presented by the case of Chartres.[50] Overall, though, Tigler frames the reading of the 'Trade Reliefs' around the *Agnus dei* on the keystone, stating: 'il senso religioso dei Mestieri qui raggruppati è..assicurato..dall'*Agnus dei* al centro, dove non a caso il Redentore si presenta "in umilità," calato nel quotidiano sacrificio dell'umanità lavoratrice.'[51] The *Parousia* thus becomes the central element surrounding the presence of the images of urban work, with their position on the main portal reinforcing the basilica's symbolic status as the earthly manifestation of the Heavenly Jerusalem.[52]

Tigler reinforces his argument by discounting the traditional identification of the figure of the 'Proto' as the overseer of works at the basilica. Instead, he proposes that his crutches and the fact he points towards his mouth might signify penury and/or his being a cripple, and that when taken within the context of the *Parousia*, this might constitute a direct reference to the message of social concord and charity as a principal component of the redemptive message.[53] Here, in fact, the analogy is convincing, for the *arti* did indeed enact a charitable role within their associated *scuole*, giving financial aid to members stricken by illness and performing devotional duties at funerals.[54] On the other hand, one could also consider that the iconography of a cripple may have some relation to that of Zachariah, especially since the 'Proto' indicates his mouth. Could this be an indication of his status as a prophet, especially since both his

[49] Tigler 1993, p.165.
[50] Quintavalle 1997, p.173. For a similar view, see also Niero 1993, pp.131-132, 138.
[51] Tigler 1993, p.164. See Ibid, pp.156-162 for the full exposition of this view.
[52] For the overall concept of the Heavenly Jerusalem in medieval cathedrals, see Williams 1993, pp.143-144.
[53] Tigler 1993, p.165.
[54] For a broad outline of social charity within the guilds, see Mackenney 1987 and also discussion above.

clothing and the seat he sits upon are grand, not the shabby accruements of a case of for charity?[55]

These speculations would present further grounds for study, but what is essential to underline at this juncture is that the *Parousia* reading does not explain is why such a revision of the *Speculum mundi* approach appeared in this particular place and, moreover, at this particular time. Michelangelo Muraro offers a reading that is representative of the state of studies as a whole:

> Nei *Mestieri* si riflette [un] realismo sociale, questo gusto per i soggetti borghesi…c'è una accurata descrizione degli ambienti di lavoro; gli utensili non sono oggetti simbolici come nel romanico. Non troviamo qui l'immobilità espressiva che caratteriza rileivi dello stesso soggetto nelle cattedrali di altre città; le figure vengono umanizzate, vivono a contatto con il quotidiano, si perde ogni misticismo, l'unica maestra è la realtà.[56]

While the depiction of tools and artisan practice in the 'Trade Reliefs' is unequivocally valuable to the historian, Muraro's statement is inherently problematic. The 'reality' of which he speaks would have been one common to Europe's urban communities, and indeed it could be argued that the subject of artisan labour within the frame of human redemption was apposite for all these contexts. Yet the subject of urban work was not in wide diffusion within in the monumental corpus; so why does it specifically appear in the portal at San Marco, and this on so prominent a scale? What was so defining about this particular environment as to engender the insertion of the theme into an otherwise fairly conventional programme? And why was it also used in the decoration of the Piazzetta column bases?

[55] For this theory I am grateful for the suggestions of Dr Louise Bourdua and Professor Samuel K.Cohn, Jr.
[56] Muraro 1985, p.13.

The 'Arti *Argument'*

The 'Trade Reliefs' of San Marco and the Piazzetta column bases provoke intriguing questions as to the reasons informing their existence. For most art historians, however, the answer to their presence in the *Insula Sancti Marci* lies in a crucial concept: that both cycles are intrinsically self-documenting representations, and that the images of urban work reflect the daily realities of their practitioners precisely because it was the artisans themselves that commissioned them. If this theory is tenable, it would abundantly bear out the reading that the images were a true mirror of the urban context, of both its practices and the notion that the artisans and tradesmen who inhabited it were in some way able to tip the balance of social inclusion in their own favour.

For the purposes of this study, this line of thinking will be dubbed the '*arti* argument.' Yet given its the centrality to the debate, what is somewhat surprising is that the very art historians who promote it are unsure about its parameters. Demus, for instance, only goes as far as to offer that the guilds probably commissioned the 'Trade Reliefs': 'è ben possibile che esse fossero una commissione delle *arti*';[57] and Quintavalle simply states that the guilds 'hanno probabilmente contribuito alla realizzazione del complesso.'[58] Even Tigler leaves the question somewhat open: 'non sappiamo se le *arti* qui raffigurati siano state davvero le committenti dell'arcone o dell'intero portale.'[59] Yet while quite fairly rejecting the argument presented by Cracco – that the 'Trade Reliefs' must be dated to the early 1270s given that this was when most of their statutes were issued – Tigler ultimately rejects the notion of historical analysis to determine their context:

[57] Demus 1995, p.17.
[58] Quintavalle 1997, p.166.
[59] Tigler 1995, 1, p.258 and n.12. See also Tigler 1993, pp.162-163.

> Specialmente in un caso come questo, in cui il ruolo di committenti degli artigiani non è affatto chiarito, credo che sia più proficuo astenersi da deterministici collegamenti fra situazioni storico-sociali ed artistiche.[60]

In effect, Tigler's statement highlights the main fault within the '*arti* argument': that it does little to shed light on what the act of patronage actually might have actually involved for the artisans and tradesmen concerned. Commissioning, of course, implies a role in the definition of the theme of the work or works commissioned, and in this case, in fact, a deliberate action of engineering self-representation. Sponsorship, on the other hand, might suggest direct financial involvement but with little impact on the decision to use the subject matter in the first place. These questions depend, of course, on nuance, but they also require us to take the very contextual approach that Tigler ultimately rejects. Not only do we need to determine the actual circumstances of the thirteenth-century guilds; we must also enter into the realm of perceived status, both on behalf of the guilds themselves and the state that ran San Marco as a civic shrine. Were the *arti* in a position to undertake an act of commissioning, and if their contribution was merely financial, who was responsible for deciding and implementing the theme of urban work in the first place?

Piacenza and Chartres: Precedents for a Contextual Investigation

If the mechanics of potential artisan patronage need to be carefully examined, at this point it is worthwhile to look at what other cases of urban iconography can provide us in terms of methodological precedents and interpretative strategies. The representation of manual toil specific to the urban context is limited to a handful of well-known cases. Of these, it is the twelfth-century relief slabs of the cathedrals of Piacenza and Lodi in Lombardy and the thirteenth-century stained glass windows of Chartres that we can take as the defining

[60] Tigler 1995, 1, p.258 n.12. In reaction to Cracco 1967, p.249. See also discussion in Chapter Three.

paradigms. Can they offer us valuable insight into the process of analysing the 'Trade Reliefs' at San Marco?

Around the year 1170, shortly after the construction of the naves and transepts of Piacenza Cathedral in Lombardy, nine sculpted reliefs were inserted into several of its massive internal columns.[61] Seven of these depict tradesmen and artisans and have identifying inscriptions. We see bakers with the words '*hec est colonna fornariorum*' inscribed into their oven **(fig.47)**; the relief of the dyers has the inscription '*Ugo Tinctor*' **(fig.48)**, and that of a wheelwright '*Iohannes Cacainsolario*' **(fig.49)**. There are also reliefs of drapers **(fig.50)**, cobblers **(fig.51)**, cordwainers **(fig.52)** and furriers **(fig.53)**.

One historian of the Piacentine *formelle*, Giuseppe Berti, argues that they should be seen in the by-now familiar thematic frame of the revaluation of manual labour, commenting:

> Ormai la forza del lavoro appartiene all'artigiano e a chi lo compie, anziché ad un padrone, e il suo acquisto è dovuto in parte notevole al riconoscimento della libera personalità per la presenza della Chiesa.[62]

In fact Berti argues that the approval of the church authorities in the formation of Piacenza's trade associations, the *paratici*, had led to a situation of 'realismo socio-politico religioso' and also to a direct act of guild sponsorship at the ongoing project represented by the cathedral.[63]

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[61] For the formal analysis of the Piacenza *formelle*, see Cochetti Pratesi 1984, pp. 603-668; Cochetti Pratesi 1975, pp.53-72; Toesca 1965, pp.135-136; Romanini 1956, pp.1-45; Crichton 1954, p.54; De Francovich 1952, pp. 18-21; Venturi 1905, p.60.
[62] Berti 1975, p.149.
[63] Ibid, p.174. For an outline of the history of the *paratici* of Piacenza, see Tagliaferri 1964, pp.81-84.

This somewhat rose-tinted interpretation does lend itself to some hypothetical links to the contemporary political context. In the twelfth century, an uncertain proportion of the trades people of Piacenza were becoming increasingly involved in the formation of lay confraternities – could the Piacentine church have applied this promotion of artisan activity in a move to draw back the religious focus of the town's population? While this notion is interesting, careful parameters should be drawn. Although these confraternities tend to be rather misleadingly termed within scholarship as *Umiliati*, they may not have been part of the Humiliati movement itself, which was only firmly rooted in Piacenza from the early years of the duecento. Frances Andrews underlines, in fact, that the twelfth-century use of the term 'Humiliati' might 'have been used here for communities administratively linked to a different order';[64] and also that at this early point, these collectives might have intrinsically been promoted by the ecclesiastical authorities, thus showing signs of having been 'a far more "establishment" experience' than traditionally framed.[65]

When we discount the theory of a troubled populace, it is difficult to view the *formelle* of Piacenza as anything but direct donations on the behalf of the trade groups they depict. Their inscriptions, in fact, go beyond mere identification; they render the images trade "badges", as it were, of the guilds concerned. In fact two other reliefs on the cathedral pillars reinforce this reading. The first shows a man indicating the stomach of an adjacent woman **(fig.54)** – a representation also repeated slightly later at Lodi **(fig.55)**, where two other reliefs show a shoemaker and a cordwainer.[66] At Piacenza, the second non-trade relief shows the figure of a pilgrim wearing a belt with a pouch inscribed with the sign of the cross **(fig.56)**. I would posit that both represent donors in acknowledgement of financial offerings: the former image might imply thanksgiving for the birth of a child or a plea for intercession, the second the revenue

[64] Andrews 1999, p.57.
[65] Ibid, p.59.
[66] For Lodi, see Caretta, Degnani and Novasoni 1966, pp.186, 201-202; Romanini 1975, p.50.

from passing pilgrims that in all likelihood contributed to the costs of the building campaign.

Demus, in fact, makes a similar distinction. He comments: 'tuttavia le raffigurazioni...di Piacenza presentano in modo molto più specifico le caratteristiche di donazioni relative a determinate parti architettoniche o decorative di un edificio...sui pilastri che in tal modo ne sono contrassegnati.'[67] At San Marco, on the other hand, the 'Trade Reliefs' constitute a monumental and integrated iconographical series: '...a San Marco le rappresentazioni dei Mestieri sono stata innalzate in una sfera più elevata e costituiscono uno dei elementi principali della decorazione figurativa della facciata.'[68] Unlike in Venice, then, the Piacentine *formelle* are emphatically not a cycle; they act as stamps on the cathedral fabric much in the same way as other donors could sponsor individual chapels or altarpieces, and it may be that the guilds used the cathedral as their meeting place in lines with widespread practice throughout medieval Europe.[69] Whether or not the conceptual or political climate affected the production of the images, the fact remains that the reliefs at Piacenza are specific to their context. With this in mind, let us turn to the case of Chartres.

The stained glass windows of Chartres constitute the most extensive cycle of the theme of urban work in the medieval monumental corpus. Executed in the early years of the thirteenth century, forty-two of the windows include approximately 125 scenes of artisans involved in twenty-five different urban trades from production to market **(figs.57, 58)**.[70] Traditionally, the 'Trade Windows' have been interpreted as evidence of direct and willing donations on the behalf of the guilds. A fire in 1194 had all but destroyed the cathedral; the rebuilding campaign became the financial concern of all

[67] Demus 1995, p.17.
[68] Ibid.
[69] For the general role of cathedrals as guild meeting-places, see Duby 1981, p.111.
[70] For the different trades in the windows, see especially Kemp 1997, pp.163, 177.

the citizenry, both noble and artisan. What emerges is an impression of simple piety, popular devotion and the clergy's acknowledgement of the rising artisan class.

Yet one scholar who has offered a distinctly different interpretation of the 'Trade Windows' of Chartres is Jane Welch Williams. In her "Bread, Wine and Money", Williams points out that the idea of willing artisan contributions might in fact misinterpret the political circumstances surrounding the production of the stained glass images. Instead she proposes that the "Trade Windows' in effect 'represent required offerings by the faithful and the obligatory presentation of work or its product by the cathedral canons and bishop.'[71]

Drawing evidence from local charters and liturgical documents in the town's archives, Williams argues that in the early- thirteenth century Chartres was far from the peaceful haven suggested by the images of its artisans. Instead, tensions had arisen around the distribution of taxes between the secular authority represented by the count of Chartres and the ecclesiastical power of the cathedral canons. Nominally, the bishop and chapter only had rights to tithes on trade carried out within the cathedral precincts. In the years after the fire, however, they increased their revenue by constraining a proportion of the town's workers to live in the cloister as their vassals or *avoués*. The income this generated was thus redirected from the count to the clergy, much to the anger of the former, and the artisans and tradesmen themselves were effectively trapped between a rock and a hard place: staying in the cloister, they had to swear an oath of non-participation in the town's communal structure, but if they ventured outside, they risked harassment, abduction or violence at the hands of the count's officials. Such a status quo, problematic as it was, was short-lived. Violence exploded in 1210 and 1215, with town workers spearheading a rebellion against both forms of oppression: secular (for the count had forbidden the formation of guilds) but

[71] Williams 1993, p.3.

especially clerical. That they were joined by some of the cloister *avoués* appears likely, for the trouble was concentrated in the area of the unfinished cathedral. Although the clergy were able to rein in the violence by the threat of eternal torment and by bodily punishment, including whipping in front of the altar of the Virgin, this was clearly far from the civic harmony of work and fair play implied by the trade scenes of the stained glass windows.

What Williams suggests, therefore, is that the production of the 'Trade Windows' should be viewed within the context of a deliberately displayed message. She argues that the fact that a good proportion of the depicted trades worked as *avoués* in the cloister cannot be coincidental. The images would reflect the nature of their existence: as obligated contributors to the financial costs of the cathedral rebuilding campaign. Yet Williams is at pains to point out that this does not undermine the fact that the 'Trade Windows' are both extraordinary and unprecedented in their scale. All she does is to shift the decision to use the imagery from the traditional reading of a self-reflexive and self-reflecting action from the part of the workers themselves to the clerics who tithed their labours. In this sense, the 'Trade Windows' do indeed represent the rehabilitation of manual labour, yet in intensely practical terms. By using the imagery of trade and tradesmen, the cathedral authorities couched the forced contributions within terms of the redemptive process, and ensured that their own treatment of the artisans concerned was framed as an ideal, whatever the real situation of the medieval town.

The ideas that Williams sets out constitute an immensely valuable methodological precedent. Her example, though, is not without its limitations. As the title of her work suggests, she takes as her case study the bakers, the vintners and the moneylenders; would a more penetrating investigation into the other trades of the windows have given alternative readings? One also suspects that the workers themselves would have

been far from indifferent to the idea of visible inclusion within the church fabric. The very fact that the trade-'donated' windows outnumber those sponsored by nobles speaks volumes; clearly there had been considerable input from the tradesmen and artisans, whether freely offered or otherwise. Wolfgang Kemp, in fact, offers useful reservations on this kind of contextual reading. He believes that the 'Trade Windows' at Chartres were undoubtedly sponsored by the guilds, but that the theme of urban work was one framed by the clergy as an effort to offset the threat of possible artisan connection to contemporary heresies, stamping out 'the worst excesses of this "association explosion"', and '[adapting] the best cases [the guilds] by a process of integration.'[72] Yet I would argue that Kemp goes too far in defining the windows as the guilds undertaking a 'collective self-portrayal.'[73] Instead it appears to have been a politic decision to use the theme on the behalf of the cathedral clergy, and a political response to the matter of funding the visible manifestation of an enduring ecclesiastical paradigm.

What the cases of Piacenza and Chartres highlight, then, is that the act of patronage must be defined with care. It also illustrates, it would seem, that some sort of agenda informs each and every case of this type of urban iconography, and that that agenda changed according to the specific nature of the context that produced it. But methodological parallels can certainly be drawn between Piacenza, Chartres and San Marco, in the sense that they frame the three most important questions we can posit about the production of a cycle of such unusual imagery: when it was executed, who commissioned it and why.

A Interpretative Key? The Selective Principal in the Iconography of Urban Work

[72] Kemp 1997, p.166.
[73] Ibid, p.171.

What the examples of Chartres and Piacenza make clear, then, is that the context that produced the 'Trade Reliefs' and Piazzetta column bases should be firmly tied to certain key considerations: the political circumstances of the thirteenth-century guilds and how commissioning and funding took place in the *Insula Sancti Marci*. Yet the potential of this sort of analysis requires unlocking, as it were, by means of another important question: what does the choice of guilds shown in the two cycles tell us about the selective principals at work?

Here, though, the dearth of direct supporting documentation is rather discomforting, and as such any potential evidence tends to punctuate the scholarship surrounding the 'Trade Reliefs.' One such case, in fact, is constituted by a source to which we have already alluded above: the passage in Martino Da Canal's *Éstoires* which vividly describes the guilds' participation in the 1268 procession celebrating the coronation of doge Lorenzo Tiepolo. Let us look at the passage devoted to the blacksmiths (*fabbri*):

> *Les maistres fevres, a tot lor servant, se aünerent ensenble desos un confanon et orent chascun une guerlande en chef et se mistrent a la voie, li confanon devant, et les trombes et autres estrumens aveuc iaus; et avoient bon conduseors. En tel maniere monterent desor li Palés et saluerent monsignor li dus et li oire(re)nt chascun vie et victoire....*[74]

When related to the 'Trade Reliefs,' Martino's account throws up more questions than it provides answers, for there is little correspondence between the guilds he cites and those of the sculptures. Only four of the eighteen *arti* he lists – the blacksmiths (*fabbri*), the cobblers (*calzolai / calegheri*), the sellers of oil and fat (*ternieri*) and the barbers (*barbieri*) – appear at the main portal; yet he states that '*les homes de tos*

[74] Da Canal 1972, pp.284, 286.

mestiers' took part in the procession.[75] While this may, of course, be a rhetorical device, what remains is the fact, as Dorigo puts it, that 'il denominatore comune fra le tre casualità (la selezione dei mesteiri dell'arcone, la scelta descrittiva di Martin da Canal, e la fortunata conservazione di certi documenti e non di altri) non è confortante né illuminante.'[76]

To address this dichotomy, Dorigo proposes that there must have been some correspondence between the choice of trades on the doorway and the relative financial and numerical impact of the workers concerned:

> Comunque, criteri di scelta per precedenze oggettivamente fondate sulla rappresentatività numerica o sulla capacità finanziaria, privilegianti mestieri non a caso rispondenti alle principali attività industriali e di servizio urbano alla città nascente, si possono certamente evincere dall'enciclopedia del terzo intradosso, anche se vi mancano importanti corporazioni di mestiere.[77]

Here, though, we can raise two points. The first is that even if the artisans of the depicted guilds were quietly prosperous, the economic clout of even a large group of coopers or bread sellers, say, would have been considerably less than that of a group of apothecaries, furriers or goldsmiths. The second notion is that the reliefs of both the main portal and the Piazzetta column bases tend to show the trades relating to industrial construction and food commerce. How can this be reconciled to the notion of their relative status?

Other art historians, in fact, have chosen to base their interpretations of the 'Trade Reliefs' on what activities the sculptures include, rather than those they exclude.

[75] Ibid, p.284. See pp.284-305 for the full passages relating to the guilds.
[76] Dorigo 1988, p.22 n.17.
[77] Ibid, p.11.

Muraro, for instance, suggests that the choice of certain artisans and traders represents 'lo schieramento di quelle corporazioni sulle quale si basava la struttura efficientissima di Venezia;'[78] Francesco Gandolfo states that the Trade Reliefs represent an emphasis on those mechanical arts that underwrote urban existence;[79] and Chiara Frugoni splits the archivolt into two halves, proposing that the lower level on either side concentrates on navigation, the upper left-hand sculptures on the food industries and those on the upper right-hand side artisan activities.[80] Yet Tigler argues for a more symbolic reading, proposing that the overall choice of trades was intended to reflect Eucharistic connotations: 'gli alimenti fondamentali della cucina mediterranea, la cui vendita è qui illustrata (pane, vino, pesce, carne ma anche latte), sono in gran parte connotati anche di significati eucaristici e quindi santificati.'[81]

Given Tigler's rationale, the omission of more wealthy guilds from the 'Trade Reliefs' may have simply come down to the ecclesiastical condemnation of the luxury trades. One has to wonder, though, whether in Venice this would have been such a concern. The church was emphatically a state-led enterprise, and the government chose to accept or reject papal strictures as it thought appropriate; the Republic's wealth and reputation rested to a great extent on precisely these luxury trades; and Martino Da Canal's narration makes it abundantly clear that there was no perceived paradox in including them in state ritual. Why, then, not on the basilica itself?

Here it is Schlink and Manno who arguably present the most cohesive and persuasive case to explain the selective principal at work. Schlink, for instance, emphasises that the activities chosen were meant to epitomise the striving for the collective needs of

[78] Muraro 1985, pp.61, 63.
[79] Gandolfo 1994, p.339.
[80] Frugoni 1997, p.895.
[81] Tigler 1993, pp.163-164.

the commune, not personal gain, in a message designed for as public a consumption as possible.[82] Even more pertinently, Manno comments:

> I mestieri destinati all'arcone marciano sarebbero da interpretare come prototipi o emblemi universali di una città fondata sul lavoro manuale. Un dramma politico dunque, oltre che catechetico, ricordando che San Marco era basilica dogale. Lo stato rendeva omaggio ai ceti produttivi ponendo la loro attività nell'economia della salvezza.[83]

What Manno underlines, therefore, is that the selection of activities for depiction within the 'Trade Reliefs' must have been planned according to some state-led imperative. In these terms, it is somewhat paradoxical that he contradicts the implications of his own argument by stating his belief that the criteria followed may not have existed in the first place, nor does he admit that his theory might challenge the notion of direct guild sponsorship.[84] It is inarguable, however, that if one acknowledges the 'Trade Reliefs.' – and by extension the Piazzetta column bases – to be the product of a superbly political process of image-making, it is vital to address the questions of when they were created, who was responsible for their commissioning, by what means, and by what motivation. It will be my contention in the following chapters, in fact, that it is the very selective concept to which Manno somewhat unsatisfactorily alludes that must come under scrutiny, for ultimately it places the context of the two cycles within one of the principal constructs of Venice's medieval civic collective: the dialectic between state and workers.

Conclusions

[82] Schlink 1985, pp.33-44.
[83] Manno 1997, p.14.
[84] Ibid, p.15.

Overall, this *fortuna critica* of the 'Trade Reliefs' and Piazzetta column bases should demonstrate that their art historical study has generated not answers but questions. These extraordinary images may indeed constitute the paradigmatic exegesis of the value of manual labour, but in the scholarly framework that surrounds them, the distinction between ideal and reality and between ideology and history is by definition blurred. It is the purpose of the next chapters of this study to disentangle the generalities surrounding the sculptures to engage with specifics: their date, their patronage and the political concepts that informed their creation in thirteenth-century Venice.

Chapter Two

Dating the 'Trade Reliefs' and Piazzetta Column Bases: Method, Misconceptions and Revised Conclusions

Introduction: Questions and Challenges

Establishing the historical context of the 'Trade Reliefs' and the Piazzetta column bases requires a firm understanding of when they were produced. To a great extent, though, the question of their date remains unresolved; and it is the purpose of the following discussion to critically analyse the scholarly debate, offering both revisions and tenable solutions.

By definition, the process of dating both cycles is a challenging undertaking. Very little primary documentation survives for their context: the ambitious campaign of works that took place in the *Insula Sancti Marci* in the course of the duecento, incorporating not only the decoration of the three façades of the basilica of San Marco but also the reworking of the Piazza and Piazzetta. Here too we meet with a defining difficulty: how to balance the traditional historiographical accounts with the more useful information offered by formal, iconographical and technical criteria, evidence which in itself has led scholars to present a range of different, often conflicting, conclusions.

With this in mind, in this discussion I will follow the example of previous art historians in suggesting that the 'Trade Reliefs' themselves can only be dated in relation to that of the sculptural work of all three archivolts of the main portal, a project that in itself must be placed in relation to what is known about the lineaments of the decoration campaign as a whole. In the first section of the chapter, I will set out existing theories surrounding the overall chronological span

of the sculptures of the main portal itself; and in the second, I will suggest why and how the dating lynchpins used by scholars to situate the start, mid point and end of works on the three archivolts within the overall frame of the duecento decoration campaign should be re-examined. In the third part of the discussion, I will examine the stylistic and iconographical evidence in the light of these modified parameters to determine the most likely date for the 'Trade Reliefs' themselves. Finally, the fourth part of the chapter will examine the issues surrounding the Piazzetta column bases, not only demonstrating the extent to which their chronology can be linked to that of the 'Trade Reliefs' at the basilica but also setting a firm base for the historical interpretation of both cycles of urban work

The Main Portal: The Art Historical Debate

The main portal at San Marco has rightly received a great deal of art historical attention, and the complexity of the debate mirrors that surrounding its context: the decoration of the basilica's three façades that took place in the course of the duecento. Before examining the various strands of scholarly opinion, though, it is essential to underline -- and indeed to confirm – an axiomatic idea that has underpinned all responses to the three archivolts: that of commensurable stylistic and technical development from the first to the third.

Let us consider the visual evidence. In the reliefs of the intrados of the first and lowest archivolt **(fig.3)**, the chief emphasis is given to the decorative aspect of the acanthus frieze rather than to the essentially planar animal and human forms contained within it. While it might be unfair to describe such an approach as rudimentary, the contrast to the extrados is striking: in the latter **(figs.4,5)**, the fighting figures, moralising scenes and acanthus whorls display a significant increase in plasticity and now inhabit their space rather than merely appearing superimposed upon it.

In the 'Labours of the Months' of the second arch's intrados **(figs.7-18)**, this effect of qualitative progression is considerably more pronounced. Here the drilling is considerably deeper, with the acanthus frieze now merely serving as a framing device for figures whose robustly rounded limbs give them new and striking volume. This plastic awareness continues into the 'Virtues and Beatitudes' of the extrados **(figs.19,20)**, where smooth, almost chubby facial features and fluid, damp-fold draperies are only slightly compromised by their rather block-like hands and feet.

By the 'Trade Reliefs' on the underside of the third archivolt **(figs.23-37)**, technical and compositional ambitions are closely intermeshed. The traders, artisans, tools and containers are disposed on two or even three planes; the deep undercutting involved thus allows full and unencumbered plasticity, with the figures in places almost pulling clear of the background. In contrast, the 'Prophets and Sibyls' of the third extrados represent a conceptual shift **(figs.21,22)**. Here, the *tour-de-force* deep drilling within the intricate acanthus bosses is coupled with a reversion to a more planar and linear quality in the figures themselves. It is clear, than, that although there was a commensurable technical and stylistic development through the six bands of reliefs, formal influences could be taken on or modified according to the preference of the sculptors, in itself implying some chronological span.

It is the dating of the various bands of reliefs, however, that has occupied the most central place within studies of the main portal, and it is worth outlining the principal findings of some of the principal scholars who have considered the problem most thoroughly. Let us take as a point of departure the conclusions of Otto Demus, an art historian whose work, in its breadth, reflects the myriad of nuances and theories that surround San Marco as a whole.

Essentially, Demus proposes that all three archivolts were executed by a single workshop. He cites two *termini post quem* to situate the earliest start of its activity: firstly the sack of Constantinople of 1204, an enterprise in which Venetian involvement resulted in a tide of *spolia* being used in the new decoration campaign, notably marble veneers and columns, mosaic and, most famously, the bronze horses of the Quadriga; and secondly a fire that broke out in the Treasury of the basilica in early January 1231, which Demus argues would have caused sufficient damage for any pre-existing sculptural work on the west façade to have been necessarily started afresh.[1]

Demus considers the marked stylistic and iconographical progression throughout the three archivolts to be the result of various influences being successively assimilated into the practice of the workshop, and this under the supervision of two principal masters. The first *capomaestro*, he suggests, oversaw the inhabited frieze of the first archivolt's intrados, with the work registering above all the impact of recent Lombard and Emilian-Romagnan sculpture, especially that of Benedetto Antelami and his circle. The same workshop head went on to supervise the extrados of the same archivolt, where increased plasticity and classicising elegance would attest to the influence of the great sculptural projects at Nôtre-Dame, Reims and Chartres.[2]

By the 'Labours of the Months' of the second arch's intrados, however, Demus proposes a new supervisor to be at the helm, a figure he dubs the 'Master of the Mestieri' since his involvement stretched to the 'Virtues and Beatitudes' of the

[1] In the Venetian calendar, *more veneto*, January 1231 is cited as 1230, since the system placed the start of each year in March.
[2] For a similar argument, see Frugoni 1997, p.895; Cochetti Pratesi 1960. Bettini, however, considers the Île-de-France to have been the key influence from the outset. Bettini 1954, p.29.

second archivolt and culminated in the 'Trade' or 'Mestieri Reliefs' of the third archivolt's intrados.[3] Demus gives chronological grounding to the output of the 'Master of the Mestieri' by citing a theory that for our purposes can be dubbed the 'Radovan argument.'

The 'Radovan argument' bears considerable consideration, for it offers what would appear to be an inviolable *terminus ante quem* for the execution of all of the main portal's reliefs up to the first four of the 'Labours' on the second archivolt. It centres on the third sculpture of the Months cycle: the 'March'. Here the iconography is highly unusual: a nude humanoid sprite blows a gust of wind through a trumpet towards the standing figure of an armed soldier **(figs.9,60)**. Following the earlier example of Venturi and Toesca, Demus points out that only one other example of this composition exists: the 'March' of the incomplete Months cycle of the cathedral portal of Trogir in coastal Dalmatia **(fig.59)**. He thus concludes that this relief must have been directly modelled on that of Venice **(fig.60)**; and since an inscription in the 'Nativity' lunette above the Months cycle at Trogir **(fig.61)** cites the year 1240 as the starting-point for the activity of a workshop led by a master called *Raduanus* (Radovan) it would logically follow that the 'March' at San Marco must have been completed by that year.[4]

In his characteristically thorough manner, Demus bolsters the 'Radovan argument' with a considerable range of iconographical evidence. In his opinion, the 'January' and 'April' at Venice **(figs.7,10)** – a man warming himself at a fire and a shepherd respectively – are used by Radovan as his models for the same months at Trogir **(figs.62,63)**; the angels in the archivolt scene of the 'Dream of Joseph' **(fig.64)** at Trogir reprise the spandrel angels of the Porta dei Fiori on San Marco's north

[3] Demus 1995, p.19.
[4] Here Demus follows the lead of Venturi 1904, pp.350-356; and Toesca 1927, pp.798-800. Within the scholarship surrounding Radovan, Trogir is often cited in its Italianised form, Trau. For an analysis of the nomenclature of Radovan, see Tigler 1996-1997, p.314 n.2.

façade **(fig.65)**; Trogir's 'Nativity' lunette **(fig.61)** is based on the 'Nativity' tympanum of the Porta dei Fiori **(fig.65)**; and the intricate acanthus whorls of the two columns flanking the portal opening at Trogir **(fig.66)** are based on the inhabited frieze of the first extrados of the main portal at San Marco **(figs.5,6)**.[5]

Given this level of iconographical analogy, Demus concludes that prior to working at Trogir, Radovan was in all probability a member of the *cantiere* at San Marco; and here he bolsters his case with perceived similarities of style and sculptural handling. He sees, for instance, considerable consonance between the tubular drapery folds of the western pair of free-standing angels at the basilica's crossing **(fig.67)** – works which he dubs the 'Clumsy Angels' in contrast to the more distinctly Antelamesque eastern pair – and those of four reliefs of the 'Evangelists' at Trogir **(fig.68)**, sufficient, in fact, to ascribe both works to either Radovan or a close collaborator. Accordingly, Demus frames the 'Clumsy Angels' as works of the 1230s – in other words shortly before Radovan departed for Trogir – and he reinforces the chronology by connecting them to works at San Marco that he regards as the product of a full assimilation of the Antelamesque and the Île-de-France, namely the series of small protome heads on the southwest pier supporting the central cupola **(fig.69)** and the heads of the first four months in the 'Labours' of the main portal itself **(figs.7-10)**.[6]

The web of formal and iconographical influence Demus uses to underwrite his version of the 'Radovan argument' is vital to any consideration of the main portal. If his line of thinking – and indeed the 'Radovan argument' as a whole – is valid, its remaining reliefs, namely the last nine 'Months', the 'Virtues and Beatitudes', the 'Trade Reliefs' and the 'Prophets and Sibyls,' must by extension date to some

[5] Demus 1988, pp.389-393; Demus 1960, pp.119-120. For a response, see Tigler 1996-1997, p.317 n.13.
[6] Demus 1979, p.11; Demus 1960, pp.120, 156-157. See also Tigler 1996-1997, p.317 n.13.

point after 1240. Yet Demus somewhat sidesteps the matter of how one could punctuate this chronological span. He does not commit to a date for the 'Trade Reliefs' themselves, for example, merely stating that their ambitious spatial solutions and the plasticity of the classicising forms represent the culmination of the practice of the 'Master of the Mestieri.'[7] In the case of the 'Prophets and Sibyls' **(figs.21,22)**, however, Demus is more specific. He frames their flattened forms as the result of two hypothetical influences: a newly-Byzantinising approach in light of the Paleologans' retaking of Constantinople in 1261, and the collaboration of the 'Master of the Mestieri' with the so-called 'Master of Heracles', who supervised the decoration of the north and south façades. Yet despite these useful criteria, all Demus is prepared to conclude is that the 'Prophets and Sibyls' must have been finalised within the period 1250 to 1275, as indeed was the decoration of the west façade as a whole.[8]

Demus's use of the year 1275 as a outside *terminus ante quem* for the main portal reflects, in fact, another key topos of studies of the main portal, as are the pieces of evidence he cites, the first of which is the mosaic of the Porta Sant'Alipio on the west façade **(fig.70)**. This, the only one of the five thirteenth-century portal lunettes showing the legend of St. Mark to have survived more or less in its original thirteenth-century form, shows a doge, his dogaressa and members of the population standing in front of the basilica itself as a bier with the saintly body is borne through the central portal. In these terms, the episode could be interpreted either as the first reception of the Evangelist's relics in the ninth century or the episode from the Marcian hagiographical canon known variously as the *apparitio* or *collocatio*, when his bones were lost and then miraculously rediscovered in the

[7] Demus offers that with the 'Trade Reliefs': 'la bottega raggiunse la sua piena maturità.' Demus 1995, p.19. See also Demus 1995, p.20; Demus 1960, pp.164-165

[8] Demus 1995, p.20. For a reconstruction of the output of the workshop of the 'Master of Heracles', see Demus 1995, p.21.

aftermath of a devastating fire in the late- eleventh century, then to be ceremoniously re-interred within the newly rebuilt church.[9]

For our purposes, the importance of the Porta Sant'Alipio mosaic is two-fold. First, like the other scholars who cite it, Demus's implicit assumption is that it and the other four lunettes would only have been put into place after the sculptural and structural works surrounding them was complete. Second, the depiction of the basilica within the mosaic would appear to show the west façade in its finished form, with clear delineations of its five portals, of the outlines of the six monumental relief slabs of the 'Virgin Orans,' Saints 'George' and 'Demetrius' and the two 'Labours of Hercules', and, crucially, of the four bronze horses of the Quadriga.[10] Date the mosaic, then, and one would have an outside completion date for the west façade, and thus by extension the main portal.

For Demus, the chronology of the mosaic can be placed in the period 1268 to 1275, a reading predicated on his theory that the figure of the doge in the mosaic is an anachronistic representation of Lorenzo Tiepolo, to whose reign Demus ascribes the completion of the west façade as a whole. In support of his argument, Demus links in another axiomatic piece of evidence, an early passage of the *Éstoires de Venise* in which Martino Da Canal refers to the lunette mosaics as a visual endorsement of the legend of St. Mark:

> *Et se vodra savoir la verité tot ensi con je le vos ai conté, veigne veoir la bele yglise de monsignor saint Marc en Venise et regarde tres devant la*

[9] For a full description of the lunette mosaic, including its explanatory inscription, see Andaloro 1991, p.209.
[10] For this argument, see also Borelli 1999, p.71; Frugoni 1997, p.867; Hubach 1996, p.373; Demus 1995, p.15 n and p.23 n.11; Bettini 1954, p.30.

bele yglise, que est escrit tote cete estoire tot enci con je la vos ai contee.[11]

Demus believes that to be cited in such concrete terms, the mosaics of the west façade must have been in place by the time Martino wrote his account; and since he also ascribes the *Éstoires* to Tiepolo's reign – as we saw in Chapter One a lengthy section of the narrative is devoted to his coronation festivities in 1268, and they break off in the year 1275, when the doge died – Demus contends that the period bounded by these two years must constitute the outside limit for the completion of the mosaics, and by extension all the sculptural works on the west façade, the main portal included.[12]

Overall, Demus's conclusions epitomise the extent to which the state of studies surrounding the main portal depends on specific chronological lynchpins for its dating: the Treasury fire of 1231, the mosaic lunette of the Porta Sant'Alipio, Martino's *Éstoires* and above all the 'Radovan argument.' Other art historians who have dealt with the problem of the main portal's chronology have, in fact, used the same criteria, but within the broad limits these provide, their theories as to how and when works took place vary considerably, and as such it is useful to briefly outline those that exemplify the different schools of thought.

Michelangelo Muraro, Fulvio Zuliani and Waldimiro Dorigo, for instance, all adhere to the idea that works at the main portal started after the Treasury fire of 1231 and finished by the time Martino referred to the west façade mosaics in his *Éstoires*. What preoccupies them above all is simply how the workshop or workshops were organised within this wide time frame. Muraro, for instance,

[11] Da Canal 1972, p.20.
[12] Demus 1995, pp.20-21. For similar arguments, see Bettini 1954, pp.29-30; Cochetti Pratesi 1960, pp.3-4.

argues for a single *cantiere* that developed its output in lines with new developments in sculpture both within and without Venice, with its chief influences being the Antelamesque, the Île-de-France and Mosan gold work. Interestingly, he also proposes the influence of late-antique sarcophagi that survived in the lagoon area, an idea that as we shall see a little later may in fact have played a strong part in the characterisation of the 'Trade Reliefs' in particular.[13]

In contrast to Muraro, both Zuliani and Dorigo see the existence of a unified workshop as an inherently false construct.[14] Interestingly, Dorigo centres his argument on the only piece of written contemporary documentation that survives for the basilica's external decoration campaign, an ordinance contained with the *capitolari* of the procurators of San Marco that in its original redaction dates to 1258:

> *Item faciemus, quod omnes Magistri de Muxe, qui nunc sunt, ad Opus dictae Ecclesiae deputati habeant et teneant ad minus duos pueros apud se qui videant, et adiscant dictam artem, intelligendo quod dicti Magistri non teneantur tenere dictos pueros in domo sua, ita quod omni tempore necessario ad dictam Ecclesiam laborari possint, et non possumus aliqualiter licentium dare, seu parabolam dicere aliquibus Magistris de Muxe, qui inceperint aliquod laborerium in Ecclesia Sancti Marci, eundi ad laborandum in aliquem alium locum, seu spetialem personam; donec laborerium, quod inceperint in omnibus et per omnia completum fuerit, et furnitum, et possumus providere dictis pueris ab uno grosso in die pro quolibet sicut nobis videbitur, usque ad unum annum postquam eos*

[13] Muraro 1985, pp.11, 13, 47, 49. For a similar reading, see also Colla 1987, p.434.
[14] Zuliani 1994, p.108; Dorigo 1988, p.21.

acceperimus, et ab uno anno in antea possumus eis providere secundum quod nobis videbitur.[15]

For Dorigo, the primary importance of this document lies in the fact that it sheds substantial light on how works were carried out within the *opus*, the organisational body for works at San Marco. Firstly, the order to hire mosaic masters, the *magistri de muxe*, was issued by the Great Council itself, demonstrating how the organisation of the *opus* was a state concern. Secondly, the express purpose of the measure was to ensure the completion of the decoration of the atrium, implying a situation in which workers were taken on as and when necessary to complete each stage of the campaign, a *modus operandi* that Dorigo argues to have applied to the duecento programme of works as a whole.

Dorigo's use of the 1258 ordinance does not, however, fully extend to what ramifications it might have for the dating of the main portal itself. Here, in fact, his argument is centred on the only lynchpin for the chronology of the main portal during its execution: the 'Radovan argument.' While he does not question its constructs, Dorigo is notable in that he expresses some doubt as to whether there was a definite link between San Marco and Trogir: 'probabilmente – non necessariamente – Raduanus vide l'opera veneziana, il "Marzo" incluso.'[16] Yet even this rather vague statement might, however, hint at a fault line within the 'Radovan argument.' Put succinctly, if the first three of the six bands of reliefs at the main portal could have been executed in the relatively short time frame of 1231 to 1240, how come the remaining three took thirty years more to complete?

[15] ASV, *Procuratori di S.Marco de supra*, busta 78, *procuratori* 182, cap.c.1. Dorigo 1994, pp.34-36; Dorigo 1988, p.20. The ordinance is cited as doc.96 in Cecchetti 1886, p.12. See also Mueller 1971, p.108; Demus 1960, p.53; Bettini 1954, p.22.

[16] Dorigo 1994, p.36. For the 'Radovan argument' in general, see Muraro 1985, p.51; Dorigo 1994, p.36; Dorigo 1988, pp. 20-21.

Two scholars who have addressed this shortfall more thoroughly are Arturo Quintavalle and Guido Tigler; and interestingly, both do so by using the 'Radovan argument' as the chief evidence for a much shorter span of works at the main portal. Quintavalle proposes a single workshop under the direction of the 'Master of Ferrara', the sculptor who had carried out the 'Labours of the Months' for Ferrara's Cathedral half a decade or so previously, including, notably, one of the finest examples of a '*Marcius Cornator*', the 'March' horn blower, in the Romanesque corpus **(fig.71a)**. For Quintavalle, in fact, the Ferrara Master's *cantiere* would have commenced operations at San Marco immediately after the Treasury fire of 1231 and would have gone on to complete its work by the time Radovan executed his portal at Trogir in and around 1240.[17]

Tigler, on the other hand, proposes a rather different theory: that the main portal at San Marco was undertaken in not one but two separate campaigns. An initial project was started under the supervision of the 'Master of Ferrara' in the early 1230s but, crucially, it was then abandoned, with its only surviving remnants being constituted by the fragmentary figure groups of the 'Adoration of the Magi' now in the Museo del Seminario di San Marco, two lions later placed in the Cappella Zen and the so-called 'Dream of St. Mark' in the niche of the main portal, which in its origin was probably intended to represent the 'Dream of Joseph' **(fig.72)**.[18] The second portal workshop, which the same master influenced rather than led, started operations around 1235; and for Tigler, the consonances between the relief of 'March' at Trogir and that of San Marco suggest that Radovan underwent a formative period within this *cantiere*. As such he sees no reason why the whole

[17] Quintavalle 1997, p.174. Cochetti Pratesi argues for the influence rather than the actual presence of the 'Master of Ferrara.' Cochetti Pratesi 1960, pp.12-13.
[18] Tigler 1996-1997, pp.289-290; Tigler 1993, p.150. The 'Dream of Joseph' was only later put into its present position in the niche of the main portal. Tigler rejects an idea proposed by Babić and Stosić: that Radovan must have executed the 'Dream of Joseph' group at San Marco given his use of the theme at Trogir; and that he is correct to do so is evinced by Stosić's self-contradictory argument that Radovan's own work was in no way influenced by the output at San Marco. Stosić 1994, p.73. See also Babić 1994, p.113.

portal at Venice could not have been finished shortly after Radovan's, possibly as early as 1245.[19]

The implications of these arguments are considerable. Put simply, if Quintavalle and Tigler are correct in their compressed time frame, the sculptures of the third archivolt and thus the main portal as a whole could have been completed within the reign of Giacomo Tiepolo, not that of his son Lorenzo some three decades later. Yet here there are two potential pitfalls. Firstly, if the main portal took only around fifteen years to complete, how does one explain the considerable progression of style and influence throughout the six bands of reliefs? Secondly, all the arguments outlined above stand or fall according to the validity of the various *termini post* and *ante quem*. The aim of the next section of the discussion is to demonstrate that the use of these chronological lynchpins does, in fact, require revision, and that the modifications they demand may, in fact, have commensurable impact on the problem of the duration of works at the main portal, as well as that of dating the 'Trade Reliefs' themselves.

The Beginning and End of Works at the Main Portal

As we have seen in our examination of the key scholarly findings surrounding the dating of the main portal, the question of when works started and finished there have tended to be framed within the wider limits of those on the west façade as a whole. But do the criteria used stand up to scrutiny?

Firstly, the importance of the Fourth Crusade as both means and motivation for the duecento programme of works needs to be taken with a little caution. On one hand,

[19] Tigler 1999-2000, p.11. In contrast to Tigler, Cochetti Pratesi proposes that the 'Adoration', along with the 'Dream of Joseph' and the Cappella Zen lions, were intended for the unfinished Porta Da Mar project on the basilica's south façade, a work which she proposes could have been still in an ongoing concern in the seventh or eighth decade of the duecento. Cochetti Pratesi 1960, pp.202-219.

it is indisputable that the booty of the sack of Constantinople was channelled into the enterprise of embellishing San Marco. The chronicles report that the process of shipping the spoils to Venice commenced in 1206 under the supervision of the Venetian *podestà* in Constantinople, Marino Zeno; yet given their sheer volume, it could be fairly considered to have been an enterprise of considerable length.[20] Added to this, there would have been some time frame involved in the process of preparing the brick façades of the Contarini basilica for their revetment of *spolia* marble veneers and columnettes, with the doorways and niches, for example, showing signs of having been undergone substantial structural alteration. Furthermore, a possible interruption may also have arisen in 1220 or 1221, when an earthquake reportedly devastated the lagoon area.[21] Yet even given these factors, it is not beyond reason that operations at the main portal could have started earlier than the date usually proposed by art historians – if not the later 1210s, at the very latest the early- to mid- 1220s.

Here the question is, then, how this reading can be reconciled with the usual *terminus post quem* scholars give for the beginning of operations, 1231. To briefly recap, in the first few days of the January of that year, a fire broke out in the Treasury of the basilica. Given that at this point in time, the south wing of San Marco was still essentially an open structure – the baptistery had not yet been built and the Porta Da Mar had not yet been closed into the Cappella Zen – the argument runs that a fire that started in the Treasury could have travelled its length to the atrium and the west façade, causing enough damage for any existing work at the main portal to be started over.[22]

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[20] For the references in the chronicles to the shipping of the spoils and Marino Zeno's role, see Niero 1993, p.136.
[21] Norwich 1977, p.173.
[22] For this view, see especially Polacco 1984, p.71. There has been speculation about whether the Treasury that the fire destroyed was on exactly the same site as its replacement. Kieslinger, for instance, suggested that the original was located in the crypt, an argument rejected by Tigler on the rational grounds that the letter of 1265 (see below) would have mentioned such a radical change. See Kieslinger 1944, p.57; Tigler 1995, 2, pp.40-41.For

This scholarly view appears to be dependent above all on accounts of the fire within the historiographical tradition. Let us look at one typical account:

> *Nel tempo de Messer Giacomo Thiepolo Dose accidentalmente entrò il fuoco nella Chiesa di S.Marco et poi nella Cancelleria et abbruggiò tutti li Privilegij et atti del Dogado con grandissima quantità de Scritture di gran valore.*[23]

Here, of course, the implication is that the documents destroyed in the fire were located in the Ducal Palace, suggesting that the flames spread much further than the Treasury itself. But was this necessarily the case? Firstly, not one chronicle mentions damage to the rest of the basilica itself; and given the inherent historiographical tendency to over-exaggeration for dramatic effect, one could argue that the real extent of the disaster would not have been understated. In fact the most important piece of documentary evidence regarding the fire – a letter doge Ranier Zeno sent to the papal curia in 1265 in order to have the survival of certain priceless relics declared a miracle – states unequivocally that the fire was contained to 'the place in the church where the relics were.'[24] Secondly, Debra Pincus points out that the documents that the flames destroyed were in fact contained within the Treasury itself, which at the time of the fire – much as in its rebuilt form – was split into two adjoining rooms, one for relics and the other the repository for important manuscripts pertaining to the procuratia of San Marco.[25] All that could

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the construction of the Baptistery and the Cappella Zen in the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries respectively, see Demus 1995, p.17; Demus 1960, p.78.

[23] BM, *Sivos*: *Vite dei Dogi*, It.Cl.VII, Cod.121, c.48. Cited as doc.9 in Cecchetti 1886, p.12.

[24] Ibid, c.93-94. Cited as doc.97 in Cecchetti 1886, pp.12-13. A relief slab he commissioned for the outside wall of the reconstructed Treasury showing the 'miraculous' relics also shows that Ranier Zeno placed great importance on the episode. See Tigler 1999-2000, p.12 n.23; Tigler 1995, 2, p.40; Demus 1960, pp.14 n.45, 18; and especially Pincus 1984, pp.39-40, 44 and figs 1 and 2.

[25] Pincus 1984, p.41.

be argued for the fire, then, is that in its aftermath all workers at the basilica may have been ordered to shore up the damage at the Treasury itself. For the main portal itself – and indeed the west façade – its impact would have been minimal, and the events of 1231 would appear to merely represent a hiatus in a campaign that could have already been an ongoing concern.

If, then, the start of works at the main portal can probably be situated by the 1220s at the latest, can similar revisions be applied to their end point? As we saw above, here too the *termini ante quem* scholars have used refer to the decoration campaign on the west façade as a whole. Let us first look at the case of the Porta Sant'Alipio lunette **(fig.70)**. Demus, it will be remembered, dates the mosaic to 1268 to 1275 on the basis that the figure of the doge receiving the relics of St. Mark into the basilica can be identified as Lorenzo Tiepolo. Yet it is the very evidence Demus uses to support his claim – the reference to the mosaics in the *Éstoires de Venise* – that contradicts his argument. As Gina Fasoli points out, it was in fact Ranier Zeno (1253-1268), not Tiepolo, who was Martino's commissioning patron; as such, the passage, situated as it is in the introduction to the *Éstoires* – in other words substantially *before* reaching the narrative of the coronation festivities of doge Tiepolo – could easily have been written in the time of Zeno's dogado.[26]

I would argue, in fact, that the creation of the west façade mosaics should be firmly situated within the reign of Ranier Zeno rather than that of his successor. Firstly, Zeno is generally credited with the expansion of the hagiography of St. Mark the Evangelist; episodes introduced *ab novo* in his reign include one already described above, the *collocatio* – which I consider to be the most likely subject of the Porta Sant'Alipio – and its prequel the *apparitio*, when St. Mark revealed the location of

[26] Fasoli 1961, pp.51, 59; Fasoli 1958, p.470. This rather invalidates Demus's dating of the *Éstoires* and by extension the mosaics to the period of Tiepolo's reign (1268 to 1275). Demus 1995, pp.20-21.

his lost relics after the prayers of the doge and populace of Venice.[27] Certainly Zeno appears to have been behind the execution of three other mosaic panels, this time within the basilica, which can be closely linked to the west façade lunettes. One, on the wall of the south aisle near the crossing, shows the *collocatio*; the other two, placed adjacently in the south transept close to the door of the Treasury, sequentially show the *apparitio*, with the left-hand panel **(fig.73)** showing the doge leading the population in prayer and the right-hand scene depicting the Evangelist's skeletal arm emerging from a pillar within which his body had been hidden.[28]

Crucially, the transept mosaics help us to date the *collocatio* scene of the Porta Sant'Alipio. Like the latter, they give the events they depict topographical grounding by using San Marco itself as the background; yet while in the Porta Sant'Alipio the cupolas of the basilica are shown in their familiar onion shape, here they have their previous hemispherical form. Since this structural innovation is also attributed to Zeno's dogado, the transept mosaics must have been executed before the Porta Sant'Alipio lunette.[29] Also, as Demus points out, the officials standing immediately behind the doge in the transept mosaics can be identified as his immediate inferiors in rank, the procurators of San Marco; since these are three in number, the *apparitio* scenes can in all likelihood be dated to either pre-1261 or pre-1266, the variable dates documentary sources give for the creation of a fourth procuratorial post.[30]

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[27] For the view that the Porta Sant'Alipio depicts the *collocatio*, see also Fasoli 1973, p.270. For Zeno's role in the expansion of the Marcian canon, see Dale 1994, p.92; Pincus 1984; Muir 1981, pp.86-87; Tramontin 1970, pp.55-57.
[28] For the *apparitio* mosaic, see also Muraro 1975, pp.60-61; Demus 1960, p.13 n.41.
[29] For the cupolas, see Polacco 1994, p.61; Dale 1994, p.85; Perocco 1979, p.59; Fiocco 1974, pp.167-169, 173-174.
[30] Demus 1960, p.154. For the conflicting dates ascribed to the new procuratorial posts, see also Chambers 1998, p.26; Muratori, '*Chronica*' of Andrea Dandolo, R.I.S., XII/1, 1941, p.310; ASV, *Procuratori di S.Marco de citra*, busta 369, fasc.2, VI: *Tempi, ne'quali furono institute le Procuratie*, 1r; ASV, *Procuratori de San Marco de supra, Chiesa*, Busta 72, processo 156, fasc.1, 3r. see ASV, *Procuratori di S.Marco de citra*, busta 369, fasc.2, iii: *Memorie circa la storia dei Procuratori di S.Marco*, 1r.
[30] Mueller 1971, pp.109, 119-120.

Here, then, we have a useful chronological sequence. The transept mosaics were the first to be executed, and this in Ranier Zeno's reign; and given the visual evidence of the cupolas, the Porta Sant'Alipio mosaic must have been executed either post-1261 or post-1266. Since, however, it must have been completed by the time of Martino's citation in the *Éstoires*, which also appears to date to Zeno's dogado, it is the former date that appears to be the more tenable.[31]

Dating the Porta Sant'Alipio lunette to the early to mid-1260s is, in fact, supported by a piece of evidence already cited above: the Great Council ordinance of 1258. As Sergio Bettini convincingly argues, the ruling, which frames in imperative terms the need to hire mosaic masters to complete the atrium, implies that there must have previously been some sort of hiatus in the decoration campaign, which in the case of the atrium may well have started as early as the 1220s.[32] I would offer, however, that Bettini's theory could be expanded. In the period immediately following 1258, with the atrium nearing a state of completion, the same workshop of *magistri de muxe* could have then turned its attention to the mosaics of the transept and the west façade. In these terms, the case for the *apparitio* scenes of the south transept having a *terminus ante quem* of 1261 is still more convincing, as is the idea that the west facade mosaics were undertaken in the years immediately following.

This chronological span is reinforced still further by a final piece of evidence offered by the lunette of the Porta Sant'Alipio **(fig,70)**: it shows the Quadriga already in place on the loggia of the west façade. Since the lower edge of the loggia is structurally integrated into the third archivolt, the upper edge of which rises above the level of the horses' hooves, this implies that the arch, and probably its

[31] Muraro dates the *apparitio* mosaic as late as 1268, the year of Zeno's death; yet the evidence of the façade mosaics rather invalidates his argument. Muraro 1975, p.63.
[32] Bettini 1954, pp.22-30. Although Bettini does not make the case explicit, this theory rather contradicts the idea that the Treasury fire of 1231 had severe impact in the atrium.

sculptures, must have been already complete at the time the Quadriga was placed above. If, then, we can fix the date the four bronze horses were placed into position, we would have another *terminus ante quem* for the main portal.

The debate about when the Quadriga arrived at the basilica, though, remains unresolved; nor, as Borelli notes, is the inquiry aided by the fact that contemporary sources do not mention it at all.[33] Later chronicles do imply, however, that there was a substantial time lag between the pillaging of the four bronze horses from Constantinople's Hippodrome and their use at San Marco. Sansovino reports, for instance, that after they arrived in Venice, they were left to languish in a storeroom in the arsenal; it was only half a century or so later that their beauty was recognised by visiting Florentine dignitaries, at which point, whether in shame or in pride, the Venetians finally transferred them to the basilica's loggia as the triumphal centrepiece of the west façade.[34]

In the event, Sansovino is probably simply repeating an apocryphal gloss on a situation later Venetians may have found hard to explain at a time, especially since by then the Quadriga had become one of the most potent symbols of the Republic. One historian who has offered a more scholarly hypothesis is Michael Jacoff. Essentially, Jacoff proposes that the four bronze horses evoke the Four Evangelists in their symbolic form as the 'Quadriga of the Lord.' He cites a page of a famous model book, the Musterbuch of Wolfenbüttel, which shows a drawing of the Evangelists John and Matthew next to a small animal Jacoff identifies as a horse **(fig.74)**. For Jacoff, this juxtaposition must have been based on direct observation

[33] Borelli 1999, p.70.
[34] For the Sansovino narrative, see Perocco 1979, p.56; Perry 1979, pp.104, 109 ns.4, 8.

of the horses of San Marco, and thus the Quadriga must have been in place by the time the Musterbuch was executed, circa 1230 to 1240.[35]

Although Jacoff's theory is attractive, I would raise two objections. First, as Jacoff himself argues, the notion of the 'Quadriga of the Lord' was in relatively common currency in the first half of the thirteenth century; as such, the Musterbuch drawing would not have to necessarily depend on observation of San Marco. Second, the drawing is frankly more akin to a lion or a griffon than to a horse. What, then, I would argue is that evidence for dating the raising of the Quadriga must be framed in the structural terms outlined above; and that, in fact, it could have been put into position very shortly after the sculptures of the main portal were completed, and not long before it was depicted in mosaic at the Porta Sant'Alipio at some point in the 1260s.

What could be said of the evidence so far, though, is that it mostly has impact on the question of when the west façade was finished as a whole. Although an overall *terminus ante quem* for the main portal is indeed provided by the lunette mosaics and the raising of the Quadriga, at this juncture one must turn to the testimony of the three archivolts themselves to help us to determine an outer limit for their completion.

Here the primary evidence is material. When the reliefs of the main portal were subjected to intensive conservation and analysis from the late 1970s onwards, close attention was justly placed on the type of stone from which they were carved. Until that point, it had been thought that the first two archivolts had been made from a *proconnesio* marble from the quarries of the Sea of Marmara near Constantinople,

[35] Jacoff 1993, pp.35-41. For the Musterbuch of Wolfenbüttel, see also Scheller 1963, pp.5, 19, 78-83.

and those of the third, on the other hand, from a stone derived from Istria.[36] This would imply that the sculptures of the third arch, the 'Trade Reliefs' and the 'Prophets and Sibyls', must have been carved after 1261; for during the hiatus between the Paleologan retaking of Constantinople in that year and the ratification of a treaty between the new administration and Venice in 1268, the latter's access to the quarries of the Sea of Marmara would have been effectively blocked, forcing the use of Istrian stone as a more accessible alternative.[37]

The 1970s restoration project at the main portal, however, provided a revelation: that the third arch was also made of Marmara marble. In these terms, there is no reason to believe that its reliefs could not have been carved before 1261; and a little later in the discussion, we shall establish the extent to which the formal and iconographical evidence of the archivolts supports this reading. Before doing so, however, it is imperative to turn our attention from the *termini post* and *ante quem* to the fulcrum of the main portal's dating: the 'Radovan argument.'

A Mid Point for Works? The 'Radovan Argument'

The importance of the 'Radovan argument' for the chronology of the main portal can hardly be overstated. It would provide us with a unique indication of a hypothetical mid point for the activity of the *cantiere* at the main portal; yet in these terms, it is somewhat surprising that its constructs have not been subject to intensive examination, nor, with one notable exception that we shall see below, do art historians expressed any degree of doubt as to its validity. With this in mind, the purpose of the next part of the discussion is to attempt to redress the balance.

[36] For the restoration of the archivolts, see Lazzarini 1995, pp.228-234; Piana 1995, pp.235-246; Lazzarini and Piana 1988, pp.162-165; Dorigo 1988, p.5.
[37] For the treaty of 1268, see Ortalli 1998-1999, pp.414-415; Cessi 1985, pp.232, 239; Pincus 1984, pp.48, 55 n.55.

As a point of departure, it is useful to describe the grounds on which the theory rests: the work of Radovan at Trogir. The west portal of the cathedral at Trogir is fundamentally an assemblage, with its reliefs being of two distinct styles and somewhat clumsily joined, implying an *avant-pose* carving procedure. From this, scholars have tenably argued that there were at least two separate campaigns, and it is important to be clear about which reliefs were undertaken in the phase of works led by Radovan himself, for these are the only ones that can be drawn into the discussion of a direct relationship with the sculptures of San Marco.

The centrepiece of the portal at Trogir is the 'Nativity of Christ' that occupies the lunette of the tympanum **(fig.61)**. The Virgin reclines in a curtained box bed, washerwomen bathe the Christ child, Joseph, as marginalised as ever, sits to one side with a crutch, and we also see the related episodes of the 'Adoration of the Shepherds' and the 'Adoration of the Magi.' Arguably the most crucial aspect of the lunette carving, however, is a factor that we cited above, namely that its lower part includes an inscription. In full, it reads as follows:

> *Fundantur valve post partum virginis alme per raduanuam cunctis hac arte preclarum ut patet ex ip(s)is sculpturis et ex anagliphis anno milleno duceno bisq(ue) viceno presule tuscano floris ex urbe treguano.*[38]

Here, then, we have the sculptor's name, that of his patron Treguan, bishop of Trogir, a statement of the latter's Florentine origins, and a starting date of 1240 for what can be presumably taken as the first part of the portal project:[39]

[38] Cited in Gvozdanović 1982, p.177.
[39] For the tenable theory that the date of 1240 records the start of works at Trogir, not their completion, see Tigler 1995 1, pp.515-516.

Since Radovan's own workshop can be safely said to have produced the 'Nativity', a vital step is to relate the formal approach of the lunette to other parts of the portal to determine which were produced during the same phase of works. Its chief characteristics – robustly-classicising modelling, plastic spatial values, intricately-defined hair curls and rounded facial types – are present, for example, in some of the New Testament scenes in the archivolt reliefs around the lunette, namely the 'Flight into Egypt', the 'Dream of Joseph' **(fig.64)**, the angels on the second bottom relief on the left and right, and the two panels on either side showing the 'Annunciation to the Virgin' **(fig.75)**, and also in the pairs of telamons on either side of the doorway, one of who bears a crutch in a manner reminiscent of the figure of Joseph in the 'Nativity' **(fig.76)**. Crucially, similar stylistic traits are apparent in the key works brought into the putative Venice-Trogir relationship: the inhabited frieze of the columnettes **(fig.66)** and, above all, the 'January', 'March' and 'April' of the incomplete 'Labours' cycle on the flanking pilasters, which show a man warming himself at a fire **(fig.62)**, the wind horn blower and the warrior, and a shepherd respectively **(fig.63)**.[40]

The other parts of the portal are characterised by quite a different style and approach, and were almost certainly produced in by a workshop subsequent to Radovan's. In the 'February' scene of figures cooking fish and pruning **(fig.62)**, the 'Four Evangelists' **(fig.68)**, the 'Adam and Eve' and the remaining archivolt reliefs around the lunette, including some of the angels **(fig.77)**, we find static modelling, far less plasticity and much shallower drilling.

[40] Another interpretation is that the two figures cooking fish and holding a cartouche could represent 'February' and the pruning scene another version of 'March', yet this is probably based on a misunderstanding of Radovan's original scheme. For the various theories surrounding the identifications of the months, see Tigler 1996-1997, pp.315-316 n.7; Belamarić 1994, p.139; Belamarić 1990, p.140; Goss 1980, p.29; Richer 1965, pp.28-32; Pressouyre 1965, p.447 n.2.

Various theories can be offered, in fact, as to why Radovan's *cantiere* did not complete the portal. First, the upheaval caused in Trogir by the Tartar siege of 1242 might have caused a forced interruption in the initial campaign, as might a conflict with nearby Split in the following three years.[41] Second, the project may have been stalled by financial difficulties. Immediately after Ogodei Khan's army retreated in 1242, in fact, a loan had to be granted to the Cathedral chapter from the Commune, and the portal's embellishment might have received new impetus from privileges and endowments conferred by King Bela IV of Hungary in recognition of the shelter he had received within Trogir's walls.[42] Alternatively, as Fisković proposes, Radovan may have left Trogir to seek work elsewhere or have simply died.[43]

This rationale in itself invalidates the some of the purported links between San Marco and Trogir. As we saw above, Demus argues that Radovan based his 'Nativity' lunette and archivolt angels on the tympanum and spandrels of the Porta dei Fiori on the north façade at San Marco **(fig.65)**; yet it is notable that he himself dates the latter to the 1260s, thus negating any link with Radovan's work undertaken a full two decades before.[44] On similar grounds, Demus's identification of Radovan or a close collaborator with the sculptor of San Marco's 'Clumsy Angels' **(fig.67)** fails to hold water, since the comparison is centred on the pilaster 'Evangelists' at Trogir **(fig.64)**, works that chronologically and qualitatively can be placed out with Radovan's own campaign.

[41] Birnbaum 1999, pp.500-502; Belamarić 1994, p.139; Andreis 1909, pp.22-24.
[42] For the benefices, see Birnbaum 1999, p.501; Tigler 1996-1997, p.320 n.36; Andreis 1909, pp.22-24. Evidence that Treguan was not a native Dalmatian may be evidenced by the fact that the name does not appear in a comprehensive register of contemporary Croat names edited in Jireček 1984. For Treguan's Florentine origin, see also Belamarić 1997, p.189; Gvozdanović 1982, p.177.
[43] Fisković 1994, p.12.
[44] Demus's inclusion of the '*Madonna dello Schioppo*' and the 'Evangelists' of the Porta Sant'Alipio into Radovan's *œuvre* falls short on similar grounds. See Demus 1995, p.21. Demus 1988, pp.389-393 and critique in Tigler 1996-1997, p.317 n.13.

What I would argue, in fact, is that forced analogies between Radovan's work and San Marco might obfuscate other, more useful, points of comparison, firstly and principally with contemporary sculpture in northern France. Radovan's 'Nativity' lunette, for instance, has one significant detail: the Virgin and Child lie within a curtained box bed **(fig.61)**. While this structure is not present in the relief of the Porta dei Fiori **(fig.65)** – which, it will be remembered, Demus proposes as Radovan's model – it does figure in the 'Nativity' of the left-hand portal of the north door at Chartres (c.1220) **(fig.78)**. Goss, Belamarić and Papastavru follow the precedent set by Katzenellenbogen in arguing that this, the first example of a tympanum expressly devoted to the theme of the 'Nativity', constitutes a deliberate statement of the duality of Christ's Incarnation, especially since it was executed at a time when heresies such as Catharism were challenging orthodox belief.[45] Could a similar motivation have been behind Bishop Treguan's commission at Trogir, and could Chartres have been its exemplum?

In terms of intent, the analogies are certainly striking. Radovan's lunette inscription reiterates the Virgin's role in the Incarnation of Christ; and Treguan appears to have fought the anti-dualist threat with particular virulence. The contemporary chronicles of Rogerius and Archdeacon Thomas of Split record that he attended the Fourth Lateran Council of 1215, the forum for Pope Innocent III's exposition of the suppression of heresy, and also that he modified Trogir's town statutes to include the penalty of the stake for those convicted of any such beliefs.[46] On the other hand, the formal differences between Chartres and Trogir might suggest more a situation of Treguan's knowledge of such precedents than that of a direct relationship. One potential source for the idea could be represented by Andrea

[45] Belamarić 1997, pp.182-183; Papastavru 1992, pp.9-28; Goss 1980, p.27. For the comparison with Chartres and twelfth-century works such as the portal at Laon and St.Anne's Portal at Nôtre Dame, Paris, see also Goss 1994, p.131; Goss 1980, p.31. For other instances of sculpture as possible anti-heretical propaganda, see Duby 1981, pp.143-149, 163-164.

[46] For the chronicles of Rogerius and Thomas Archdiaconus of Split, see Birnbaum 1999, pp.500-502.

Buvina's wooden doors for Split Cathedral, especially since one panel depicts a 'Nativity' remarkably similar to that of Trogir. Since the doors were commissioned by Treguan's mentor Archbishop Bernardo of Split, who also attended the Fourth Lateran Council, it is notable that their programme, to which Gvozdanović ascribes a similar anti-heretical interpretation, might well have been of influence at Trogir, and overall the theory presents grounds for fruitful investigation.[47]

With this in mind, let us turn back to the figure of Radovan himself. As Tigler puts it, the sculptor's 'freschezza inventiva non può certo essere spiegata in termini strettamente dalmati.'[48] Yet while Radovan's work registers a rich set of influences, I would argue that they were not necessarily derived by way of San Marco. The fluid drapery folds and deeply-drilled hair curls of the angels in the archivolt scene of the 'Dream of Joseph' **(fig.64)**, for instance, constitute a more elegant translation of French classicising modes than the 'Clumsy Angels' at San Marco **(fig.67)**, arguably even more so than the rather lumpish 'Virtues and Beatitudes' of the second archivolt of the main portal **(figs.19,20)**. Nor is Radovan's evocation of the Île-de-France purely formal. While Demus, as we saw above, cites the 'January' of Trogir as an emulation of that of San Marco, all that can be said is that they share a common iconographical heritage: the composition is used for 'February' at both Reims and Amiens **(fig.79)**, and indeed one could say that Radovan's version more successfully evokes their fully-moulded plasticity than his purported model in Venice.

Even without these potential links, however, it must also be underlined that Radovan was also clearly aware of sculptural models in the Italian peninsula, and not necessarily via a Venetian filter. The inhabited whorls of his columnettes at Trogir **(fig.66)** demonstrate a sophisticated take on the great acanthus friezes of

[47] Gvozdanović 1982, pp.180-182.
[48] Tigler 1996-1997, p.289.

portals in Puglia, Emilia-Romagna and Lombardy, certainly more so than the flattened forms of the extrados of the first archivolt at Venice, which Demus proposes as Radovan's model **(figs.5,6)**, where the flattened forms bear little comparison with the plastic, deeply-cut approach at Trogir.[49] There are also possible analogies between Radovan's work and that of Benedetto Antelami. Goss, for instance, notes that in the archivolt reliefs of the 'Annunciation' at Trogir **(fig.75)** and that of the tympanum of Parma Cathedral **(fig.80)**, the Virgin stands in the same profile position, her hand rather awkwardly emerging from her columnar drapery folds to indicate the angel opposite. This, in fact, leads him to propose that Radovan spent a formative period within Antelami's workshop.[50]

I would suggest, though, that Goss's conclusion is overly forced, for what it elides is the possible, indeed probable, role of manuscript models and pattern books in any such formal and iconographical relationships. Quintavalle, for instance, argues that Antelami's output at Parma was at least in part reliant on Byzantine manuscript exempla.[51] Is it not conceivable that a similar situation applied in Trogir, itself a dependency of Constantinople until the late- twelfth century? To this line of argument we can add two additional considerations. First, Trogir was itself a prestigious centre for manuscript production in the duecento, with one notable product being the 'Trogir Evangeliary', a strongly Byzantinising work that contains a scene of the 'Annunciation' very similar to Radovan's.[52] Second, like his mentor Archbishop Bernardo of Split, Treguan may well have possessed a library of manuscripts, a resource that could have provided the models to which he and his sculptor referred; but even without this factor, the relatively sparse survival

[49] Demus 1988, pp.389-393; Demus 1960, pp.119-120. Both Tigler and Dorigo also argue against Radovan's direct dependency on the inhabited frieze of San Marco. Tigler 1996-1997, pp.297, 317 n.13; Dorigo 1994, p.36.
[50] Goss 1980, pp.27, 30, 32-34.
[51] Quintavalle 1969.
[52] Fol.77r. For full reproductions of the 'Trogir Evangeliary', see Demović and Bratulić 1997.

of pattern books should not exclude their importance in the dissemination of medieval artistic practice.

While it may be a falsely reductive exercise to argue for the influence of overly specific prototypes, the notion that Radovan, and indeed Treguan, may have seen San Marco's main portal as a work in progress certainly cannot be discounted out of hand. If they travelled – and this does appear likely – they may have sailed directly between Trogir or Split and the coastal ports of the Marche, the Abruzzi or Puglia; but equally Venice would have been a logical stop-over en route to or from Dalmatia, especially at times of the year that sea travel would have been impractical. Yet in the cultural sense, if Venice cannot be defined as the only point of reference, it was arguably also not the most obvious one; for in the period under question, political relations between the Republic and Trogir were not close. While the latter did pass into Venice's control in the first half of the fifteenth century – accounting for the distinctly Venetian character of its later architecture – in the duecento itself, only Dubrovnik and Zadar were in its hands, the former from 1236 and the latter, which required violent subjugation in 1202 and 1243, from the late twelfth century.[53] Trogir, like the other communes of coastal Dalmatia, had passed directly from Byzantine overlordship into the nominal control of the Hungaro-Croat kingdom, a process that the Venetians had attempted to jeopardise by sacking the town in 1171.[54] In the 1240s, in fact, Trogir's *de facto* ruler was Treguan, its bishop; and while possession of Zadar and Dubrovnik may have given

[53] For the treaty of 1420 for Trogir and that of 1437, which placed the rest of coastal Dalmatia in Venetian hands, see Seneca 1999, pp.151-152; Tigler 1996-1997, p.315 n.6; Cracco 1967, p.182. For Dubrovnik, see Cessi 1985, pp.114-115; Krekić 1973, pp.393-394. For Zadar, see Hindley 2004 p.151; Seneca 1999 pp.159-160; Belamarić 1997 p.177; Tombor 1985 p.262; Cessi 1985 pp.135-144; Gvozdanović 1982 p.177; Lane 1973 p.75; Andreis 1909 p.20. For Venice's attempted hegemony in Dalmatia, see Seneca 1999, pp.155-159; Tombor 1985, pp.261-262; Lučić 1994, p.267; Morris 1980, pp.151-171.

[54] For the rule of Hungary, see Hindley 2004, p.150; Seneca 1999, p.158; Lučić 1994, p.267; Belamarić 1997, p.177; Cessi 1985, pp.43, 64-65; Gvozdanović 1982, p.177; Fisković 1951, p.XXXVI.

Venice a considerable trading foothold in the Adriatic, Trogir itself appears to have functioned as an independent, if limited, player on the maritime stage.

If there are concrete links between Trogir and the Italian peninsula, these are best perceived in the second portal project, not Radovan's, and here we need to look to the south, not the north. Tigler, for example, proposes that the sculptors who completed the works may have had formative experience *in* Apulia – *in* fact the rather wooden modelling probably does their sources a disservice – and have brought their training to fruition at Trogir as late as the seventh or eighth decade of the thirteenth century, or even the turn of the next.[55] In political terms, the connection is convincing. As Frederick Lane points out, Dalmatia depended heavily on Apulia for its grain;[56] and from the outset, trading relationships with Frederick II's administration were strong, with Treguan himself consolidating such a treaty between Ancona and Trogir in 1236.[57]

If, in fact, the workshop that operated at Trogir from the 1270s or 1280s onwards was indeed Apulian in its formation, what is interesting – and arguably rather contradictory – is that links can also be made to San Marco. What to my knowledge has not been noted, for instance, is that an angel on the corner of the ciborium inside Trogir cathedral **(fig.81)** is almost identical to one in San Marco's atrium; the latter, like the former, appears to have been executed in the 1270s or shortly afterwards.[58] In this period, then, the dynamic may indeed have been more complex; the question is, though, whether a direct relationship between Venice and

[55] For the former date of the 1260s to 1270s, see Tigler 1996-1997, pp.299-302; for the latter of the early 1300s, see Goss 1980, p.29. For Puglian influences in the second phase of works at Trogir, see Tigler 1996-1997, p.313; also Belamarić 1997, pp.180, 193; Belli D'Elia 1994, p.45.
[56] Lane 1973, pp.63-64.
[57] For such trading and political links, including the 1236 treaty between Ancona and Trogir, see Gvozdanović 1982, pp.177-178; Andreis 1909, p.20. For Apulia's status as 'the granary of Dalmatia', see Lane 1973, p.64.
[58] For the idea that Venetian impact was only registered in Trogir in the later duecento, see Fisković 1974, pp.176-177.

Trogir stands up to scrutiny three decades or so before, and here I would suggest that the assumptions underlying this construct of the 'Radovan argument' demand closer investigation.

It is iconographical evidence, though, that lies at the heart of the 'Radovan argument', and ultimately it is here that it stands or falls. Let us briefly recap. The representation of the month of 'March' at Trogir and San Marco uses a composition unknown elsewhere in the medieval 'Labours canon': a wind sprite and a soldier. Essentially, art historians argue that the 'March' of San Marco was an *ab novo* conflation of two pre-existing traditions for the representation of the month. According to this theory, the wind personification would be derived from the western '*Marcius Cornator*' motif, a man or boy blowing on one or two horns to indicate the blast of the wind. Here, the sculptors at San Marco would have taken their inspiration from the Lombard and Emilian sculptural tradition, for example the thirteenth-century 'Labours' cycles of Cremona Cathedral, Parma Baptistery **(fig.72b)** and the Duomo of Ferrara **(fig.71a)**.[59] Second, the figure of the warrior would have been taken from the Byzantine Months corpus, which scholars argue would have been available to the Venetian *cantiere* in the form of such manuscripts as the eleventh- or twelfth-century 'Marcian Evangeliary' **(fig.82)**, which also shows the eastern motif for April, the shepherd, a symbol that also appears in the 'Labours' of both San Marco and Trogir.[60]

The 'Radovan argument' has appeared in this form in most scholarly approaches to the main portal, unquestioned and unaltered. Yet one historian who has put its

[59] For the '*Marcius Cornator*' tradition, see especially Pressouyre 1960. For the geographical distribution of the different themes for March, including the '*spinario*' thornpuller, the digger and the vine-pruner, see Mane 1983, p.72; Pressouyre 1960, p.497; Schapiro 1941, pp.135-136; Rasetti 1940, p.46.

[60] For the 'Marcian Evangeliary' (BM gr.Z 540), see Zucchetta 1990, p.165; Furlan 1979, p.13; Åkerstrom-Hougen 1974, p.84; Stern 1955, pp.168, 173, 175-176, 182; Strzygowski 1888, pp.23, 25, 27-45. For the dozen or so surviving Byzantine Labours cycles, see Stern 1955, pp. 147 n.4, 167-168, 184; Mane 1983, pp.74 n.95, 83-85; Åkerstrom-Hougen 1974, pp.74-77, 152.

constructs under scrutiny is Jôsko Belamarić, and on the basis of fundamental differences between the 'March' reliefs of Venice and Trogir **(figs.60,59)**, he proposes that Radovan did not use San Marco as his exemplum but only as his inspiration. Instead, he would have used another instance of the wind-warrior conflation as his model, one, moreover, in all likelihood in the form of a manuscript.[61]

Since it is so crucial to the discussion, Belamarić's argument bears close analysis, and it is also useful to develop and expand its implications. First of all, he points out variants in the appearance of the two soldiers. At San Marco **(fig.60)**, the unhelmeted figure has his sword sheathed and bears a spear and a pointed shield. At Trogir **(fig.59)**, on the other hand, he is helmeted, has no spear, holds a round shield and has his sword brandished. For Belamarić, the strongest analogy for the San Marco soldier lies in the west façade's relief slab of St. George **(fig.83a).**[62] At Trogir, though, the model was clearly different. What Belamarić does not do, though, is to suggest the hypothetical sources for Radovan; and here it is opportune to comment on the various possibilities. One, of course, is a direct model from the Byzantine months canon; as noted above, the surviving corpus does not indicate its original volume. Another possibility, I would suggest, consists of the illustrated Byzantine compendia of saints' days known as the *Metaphrastian Menologia.* These included a variety of military figures and were, as Kessler states, 'a basic Byzantine source book.'[63] The implications of such an argument, though, must remain a subject for investigation out with the present context.

Other factors that Belamarić notes are arguably more revealing of Radovan's potential use of a manuscript model. At San Marco **(fig.60)**, for instance, the

[61] Belamarić 1997, pp.187-188. See also Belamarić 1994, p.144.
[62] Belamarić 1994, p.140.
[63] Kessler 1990 p.vii.

warrior's hair flies upwards in thick plastic locks and the horn blower has small, composed curls around its forehead. For Belamarić, these details evoke sculptural examples of the '*Marcius Cornator*' such as at Ferrara **(fig.71a)** and at the baptistery of Parma **(fig.71b)**. At Trogir **(fig.59)**, on the other hand, the situation is more redolent of the two-dimensional tradition than the plastic. The soldier's hair remains immobile in tiny, delicately carved whorls around the edge of his helmet, while the genie's own hair flies upwards in elegant but planar ripples.

Belamarić also points out one detail present at Trogir but lacking at San Marco – *pneuma*, delicate rippling lines to denote the blast of air from the horn blower's trumpet – and here it is useful to develop the implications of his line of thought.[64] *Pneuma* were sometimes used in 'Creation' scenes, for example, to denote the breath of God and also in battle scenes where the wind was personified as an adverse influence.[65] Above all, however, they were a feature of the wind tables or *roses des vents* that appeared within a crucial medieval corpus, that of compendia treatises that dealt with astrology, astronomy and meteorology. One salient example, for instance, is constituted by a twelfth-century manuscript at Dijon **(fig.84)**, where a *rose des vents* depicts the four cardinal winds with *pneuma* emerging from their trumpets, with their handling, in its rippling linearity, bearing considerable comparison with Radovan's use of the motif.[66] Crucially – and this is where Belamarić's argument really stands proud – *pneuma* rarely featured in the sculptural tradition. To my knowledge, in fact, there are only three examples: the twelfth-century reliefs of 'Euros' and 'Auster' of the west facade of Piacenza Cathedral **(fig.85)**, a wind personification on the archivolt at St-Lazare at Avallon and the '*Marcius Cornator*' of San Zeno in Verona. All of these, however, use the device in such a linear and planar manner to make the conclusion that their

[64] Ibid, pp.140-141; Belamarić 1997, p.188.
[65] For the biblical tradition of the breath of God, see Moscati 1947, pp.305-310. For examples of battle scenes including '*pneuma*,' see Pressouyre 1965, pp.408-410; and
[66] Dijon, Bibliothèque Municipale, MS.448, fol.80r.

sculptors used a two-dimensional model inescapable, and it is not beyond reason to apply the same rationale to Radovan.

For Belamarić, however, the key difference between the two wind personifications at Venice and Trogir lies in their characterisation. At San Marco **(fig.60)**, the figure has smooth, softly rounded limbs that indeed evoke the plastic Antelamesque tradition such as the 'March' of Parma Baptistery **(fig.71b)**; it twists away from the warrior in a kneeling pose that hides its genitals.[67] At Trogir **(fig.59)**, on the other hand, it has deeply incised folds of flesh – once more evoking a linear model – and, crucially, it stands in a frontal pose exposing what, before accidental or deliberate damage, was emphatically a priapic organ.[68]

Once more we can extend Belamarić's observations to their logical implications, and these ultimately revolve around potential meanings. First, like the *sheela-na-gig* of the English Romanesque tradition, the overt sexualisation of the motif could refer to the warding-off of evil spirits. Second, it could be a reference to the ancient evocation of fertility, such as the priapic imagery of Mercury. Above all, though, I would suggest that its juxtaposition with the figure of the warrior could, in fact, have its origins in Roman antiquity, where the god of war, Mars, was also worshipped in the form of the fertility god Mavortius, a figure who was not only linked to the god Priapus but also had his principal festivities in the month of March.[69]

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[67] Belamarić 1994, p.141, citing Pressouyre 1960, p.447 n.1.
[68] Belamarić's argument is supported by the fact that this linear treatment of flesh-folds was only rarely found in sculpture. I have found only two exceptions: a demon in a cloister capital at Monreale and the '*Marcius Cornator*' at San Zeno in Verona. I would suggest, though, that these too are modelled on manuscript exempla.
[69] For the March rituals of Mavortius and Mars as an agricultural deity, see Hornblower and Spawforth 1996, pp.929, 1557; Ferguson 1980, pp.8, 26-27, 29-30, 43-44; Grant and Hazel 1973, p.270.

What is abundantly clear, though, is that Radovan must have used a different model for his wind personification than the 'March' of San Marco, and here I would go beyond Belamarić's argument to suggest that routes of enquiry once more lie in the medieval compendia tradition. The textual and illustrative conjunctions they included were extremely varied, especially from the ninth century onwards when the original base for the treatises was enriched by arrival in the Latin West of Arabic glosses on the Greek ancients, reintroducing, for instance, the myriad of iconographical possibilities that arose from a new interest in decanal astrology.[70]

Yet even in the scholastic base for compendia – which included the writings of ancient authors such as Ptolemy, Aratus and Germanicus Caesar as well as those of Isidore of Seville and Hildegard von Bingen – the various winds could be characterised as both benign and malign entities. One visual example is constituted by an early thirteenth-century *rose des vents* in the National Library in Vienna **(fig.86)**, which represents the winds as devils with streaming hair in a manner that presents considerable analogies with the malign sprite at Trogir **(fig.59)**.[71] In itself, in fact, the analogy is potentially very significant. If such exempla were indeed in circulation – with the one that Radovan used being very different in its characterisation to the composition at San Marco – it would not only invalidate the necessity of *any* direct relationship between San Marco and Trogir but also imply that the warrior-wind conjunction need not have been invented at Venice or Trogir in the first place.

[70] For the impact of the decanal system in the west, see Sniezynska-Stolot 2003; Warburg 1999; Blazeković 1996, pp.225-226; Komborian 1987, pp.127-129; Grant 1980, pp.166-167. For the most influential illustrated decanal manuscript, the twelfth century *Fenduli*, and its thirteenth-century copy, the *Picatrix*, see Blazeković 1996, p.226; Cardenas 1981, pp.18-20.

[71] Österreischische National Bibliothek, cod.378, fol.1v. See Obrist 1997, pp.83-84 and fig.34 p.81. See also a thirteenth-century illustration of Hildegard von Bingen's *Liber divinorum operum* at Lucca (Biblioteca Statale MS 1942 fol.9r). Obrist 1997, fig.31 p.78. For both malign and benign characterisations of the winds in antique and medieval thought, particularly in the highly influential work of Hildegard and Isidore of Seville, see Obrist 1997, pp.39-43.

While it is impossible to establish what exemplum or exempla Radovan might have used for his March, what we can undertake, at least on a speculative level, is a brief discussion of how the ideas that informed the wind-warrior juxtaposition came about *before* the composition was used at Venice and Trogir, especially since the context for the development of 'Labours' imagery as a whole was emphatically that of manuscript compendia.

First of all, let us consider the fundamental connections of the month of March to the figure of the warrior god, Mars, and to the idea of the wind. The earliest known compendium, the fourth-century 'Chronograph of 354', personifies March as a shepherd **(fig.87)**, a probable reference to the Faustulus of the Romulus and Remus foundation myth, and verses placed alongside stress that the patron deity of March is Mars, the father of the legendary twins; added to this, the 'Chronograph' also includes a personification of Mars as a planetary deity with his cloak gusting in the wind **(fig.88)**.[72] As such, the Byzantine motif of the March warrior – with examples being the monumental sixth-century mosaic at Argos **(fig.89)**, the months of the ninth-century 'Vatican Ptolemy' **(fig.90)** (itself based on a fourth-century original) and the 'Marcian Evangeliary' already cited above **(fig.82)** – should be regarded as the continuation of a pre-existing conceptual link.[73]

[72] The 'Chronograph of 354' is now only known in seventeenth-century copies, but the fourth-century original was probably based on older precedents. See Salzman 1990, pp.33, 52, 68-69, 73-74 n.40, 276-277. For the verses, see Salzman 1990, p.106 and ns.214-215. For the 'March' and its interpretation, see also Sniczynska-Stolot 2003, p.36; Äkerstrom-Hougen 1974, pp.77, 127; Levi 1941, pp.257-259; Webster 1938, p.14.

[73] For extended versions of this argument, see Salzman 1990 p.52; Äkerstrom-Hougen 1974 p.127; Levi 1940. For the traditionalist opposing view of an West-East split in the development of the March warrior, see Stern 1953, p.223; Stern 1955, p.147 n.4. For Argos and similar mosaics at Tegea and Beisan, see Äkerstrom-Hougen 1974 pp.73-82, p.80 fig.43.4, Stern 1953 p.223, Webster 1938 pp.23-25; Bérard 1893 pp.1-24. For the 'Vatican Ptolemy' (BAV Vat.gr.1291), see Äkerstrom-Hougen 1974, pp.73, 133-134; Stern 1955, p.167; Obrist 2001, pp.20, 28.

If the eastern canon of 'Labours' imagery was ultimately a product of late antiquity, so was that of the Latin west, where the connection of Mars to the month of March continued to develop. It is present, for example, within the *De mensibus* of Dracontius and the *De rerum natura* of Lucretius, both canonical texts for the compendia tradition;[74] and in a planisphere at Boulogne-sur-Mer **(fig.91)** – contained within a compendium based on the 'Leiden Aratus' (itself a Carolingian manuscript strongly influenced by Byzantine production) – 'March' is represented as a shepherd armed with a spear, effectively conflating the ideas present within the 'Chronograph' half a millennium before.[75] Similarly, the 'Vienna Calendar' **(fig.92)**, also part of a ninth-century compendium, shows the month as a figure in a dark red soldier's tunic and cloak holding a writhing snake and a bird; and here it might be profitable to investigate the possibility of a residual influence of Mithraism, a cult which integrated the imagery of a warrior figure with that of the winds.[76]

It is the connection of the wind to the soldier, though, that appears to have informed the prospective model or models that informed the 'March' compositions at Venice and Trogir; and the concept was indeed present within the 'Labours' tradition. In the twelfth-century Shaftesbury Psalter **(fig.93)**, for instance, the month is personified as a bearded man in a long tunic holding a spear; he blows a

[74] Dracontius, *De Mensibus*, lines 5-6 (Webster 1938, p.109); Lucretius, *De rerum natura*, V, lines 1226-1235 (Rouse 1975, pp.473-475). See also Vegetius, *Epitoma rei militaris* IV.38.686ff; Ptolemy, *Tetrabiblos*, II, 8, 20 (Ashmand 1917, p.99).

[75] Boulogne-sur-Mer, Bibliothèque Municipale, Ms.188 fol.30r. For the Leiden 'Aratus' (Leiden Bibliothek der Rijksuniversiteit, cod.Voss.lat.q79 fol.20v), see Katzenstein and Savage-Smith 1988; Golob 1984, p.81; Grant 1980, p.32. Verkek 1980; Webster 1938, fig.26. For the passage on which the representation is based, see Germanicus Caesar, I, 25-49 (Gain 1976, p.75).

[76] For the Vienna Calendar (Vienna Nationalbibliothek, MS 387, f.90v), see Stern 1955, p.149 and fig.1; Åkerstrom-Hougen 1974, p.95; Goldschmidt 1928, plate 13. Arguably this particular representation might reprise Mithraic imagery; and the potential impact of Mithraism on iconographical development in the centuries after its suppression is an analysis that has not yet been substantially explored.

horn, and his hair streams in the wind.[77] Scholars have been unsure whether to place this image in the western or eastern canons of 'Labours.' Schapiro, for instance, comments: 'evidently the two traditions, the older Byzantine warrior for March and the western image of the wind, are united in a single conflate figure.'[78] Yet I would argue that the 'March' of the Shaftesbury Psalter simply illustrates two related factors: the development of symbolic allusions from the late-antique compendia corpus to its offshoot, the 'Labours' tradition, and the fluidity of the process of iconographical transformation.

But if the ideas underlying the warrior-horn blower composition at Venice and Trogir were indeed in circulation, did any exempla also juxtapose them in form? The key precedent scholars have cited for the reliefs at Venice and Trogir, in fact, is constituted not by a representation of March or Mars but by a folio in the ninth-century 'Chludov Psalter' showing the Patriarch Iannis beset by a devil with streaming hair and *pneuma* **(fig.94)**.[79] Yet if suggesting that the 'Chludov' was a direct model for Radovan is a distinctly forced argument, enough examples exist of the March-wind conflation to suggest that other such representations might have been in existence.[80] In the twelfth-century 'Gerona Creation Tapestry' **(fig.95)** – itself a work probably based on manuscript models – the symbolic figure of the month, with the rather mystifying attributes of a crescent moon, a snake, a stork and a frog, is placed alongside a wind-head which gusts *pneuma*; and the idea is also reprised in a late- thirteenth or early- fourteenth-century manuscript in the Vatican Library where a small sprite, this time perched in a tree, blows wind onto

[77] BL Landsdowne 383, f.4. See Boase 1953, pp.108-110, 174, pls.31b, 31d, 37b; British Library, *Digital Catalogue of Illuminated Manuscripts* (http://prodigi.bl.uk/illcat/record.asp?MSID=8825&CollID=15&Nstart=383).
[78] Schapiro 1941, p.135.
[79] Moscow Historical Museum, Ms.Add.Gr.129 fol.35v. For the notion of the 'Chludov Psalter' as a model for Radovan, see Mane 1983, p.75; Pressouyre 1965, p.455 and n.1; Grabar 1957, pp.198-201. For a fair refutal, see Belamarić 1994, p.141.
[80] The idea that March was characterised by strong winds is also present within the scholastic tradition, notably Isidore of Seville, *De rerum natura*, Book IV, lines 259-264.

the vine-pruner below **(fig.96)**.[81] And while anachronistic, the development of the concept is illustrated by a fifteenth-century manuscript in the Vatican Library, which places within soldiers, demons and wind personifications within the planetary sphere of Mars **(fig.97)**.[82] Could this represent the continuation of a tradition that has simply left very few traces?

These brief observations are intended only to underline that the 'Radovan argument' may be more open to question than even Belamarić acknowledges. In the absence of firm alternative models, there can be no way of knowing on what exempla either composition for 'March' was based, especially in the case of Venice, when it appears to have been so strongly filtered through the Lombard and Emilian-Romagnan sculptural tradition. I would suggest, though, that the impact of manuscript compendia on doxographical exchange within secular and religious iconography has been unfairly undervalued; and that potential models for the warrior-horn blower composition might have simply fallen victim to the pattern of loss that marks medieval manuscripts as a whole.[83] The paradoxes in the 'Radovan argument', in fact, are rather ironically summed up by one of its most staunch adherents, Guido Tigler. On one hand, he admits that the Dalmatian sculptor might well have used an exemplum unknown to the sculptors at San Marco;[84] on the other, he ultimately rejects the notion that the usual Venice-Trogir dynamic might be invalid:

[81] BAV Vat.Lat.4363 fol.110r. See also Pressouyre 1965, pp.443-445.
[82] BAV Vat.reg.lat.1283 fol.28v. See Saxl 1970, pp.34-35 and fig.45; Warburg 1999, p.628 fig.138. The conceptual connection between Mars and storms is probably antique in origin. See Ferguson 1980, p.27.
[83] For the issue of manuscript survival, see especially Scheller 1963, pp.2, 4-7.
[84] Tigler 1996-1997, p.291.

> Le differenze osservate da Belamarić sono significative, confermando l'autonomia inventiva di Radovan, ma non potrebbero essere sfruttate fino al punto di negare o invertire il rapporto Venezia-Traù.[85]

Positions of safety, however, may well prove to be false friends; and I would argue an opposing case to Tigler, namely that the differences between San Marco and Trogir do, at least potentially, invalidate the present version of the 'Radovan argument.' Further investigation is certainly required. In the context of the present discussion, however, all that can be concluded is that the debate must remain open.

The Dating of the Archivolts: The Stylistic Evidence

If the 'Radovan argument' is more open to question than scholars have previously allowed, removing it from the equation would not present an insurmountable obstacle to dating the main portal. The modified parameters presented in the earlier part of this chapter already suggest that works might have started there in the mid-1220s and finished by 1261, the year in which relations between Venice and Constantinople temporarily reached a crisis point. The task now is to pinpoint the chronology of the archivolts within these admittedly broad limits; and here it is opportune to turn to detailed stylistic analysis.

The handling of the first arch's intrados appears to support a starting date of the 1220s, in other words immediately after the west façade had received its new revetment. Its inhabited scroll **(fig.3)** more than bears out a connection to Lombard and Emilian-Romagnan precedents; in its formalised planarity, it echoes the work of Wiligelmo at Modena, and the plasticity of the heads of the human and animal figures evoke a somewhat clumsy translation of the Antelamesque. Yet these flattened forms might constitute a deliberate formal approach rather than any

[85] Ibid.

notion of a rudimentary handling. The focus is essentially on the decorative potential of the bunches of grapes and trailing vine tendrils instead of on the figures framed within it, in itself pre-empting the balance of Byzantine and western approaches that informs the work of the 'Master of Heracles,' notably in the monumental relief slabs of the west façade **(figs.83a,b)**, where the human figures are pressed to the background plane in order to concentrate on an elaborate interplay between decoration and form.

The extrados of the first archivolt **(figs.5,6)**, however, registers a substantial shift in the formal handling. The modelling of the framing device – a pattern of acanthus fronds that interweave and branch into medallions – is now far more robust; and the figures also have a more pronounced sense of plasticity, with their thick curling locks and blunt fringes, for example, echoing Antelami's 'Months' at Parma Baptistery **(fig.** and the 'Labours' of the 'Master of Ferrara' **(fig.71a)**. Yet here too the translation is somewhat ungainly. The heads are disproportionately large, and it is difficult to ascribe the rather vacuous facial types, the short, rather stumpy arms and ill-defined musculature of the legs to a collaborator of Antelami, let alone to the 'Master of Ferrara' himself (a theory, it will be remembered, proposed by Tigler). Even so, the extrados of the first arch marks a distinct contrast to the Byzantinising planarity of its intrados, and is almost certainly to be dated to the early to mid- 1230s, before the influence of Lombard work was fully tempered by the impact of the French Gothic.

The 'Labours of the Months' **(figs.7-18)** on the intrados of the second archivolt take these lessons still further. The framing acanthus tendrils are now far more plastic than the flattened forms of the first archivolt; the facial types of the figures have a livelier characterisation and their limbs are deeply and roundly modelled, although sometimes – for instance in the figure warming himself at the fire for

'January' **(fig.7)** – there is a lack of clear articulation between forearm and hand. In some of the more accomplished months, 'March' **(figs.9,59)** being a case in point, the accumulation of figurative elements gives greater depth than in the first archivolt; yet here too the components still appear superimposed onto the background rather than inhabiting a volumetrically-defined field in front of it.

While the weaknesses within the 'Radovan argument' require us to date the 'Labours' by other means, I would propose that the second extrados may not be far removed from Radovan's work at Trogir, with a possible date of the later 1230s to the mid- 1240s constituting a small but significant adjustment to the traditional scholarly view. In fact I would suggest that both cycles demonstrate an increased familiarity with the output of the great sculptural workshops of the Île-de-France. The strong yet delicate classicising approach used in the Venetian 'Labours' is not dissimilar to that used by the so-called Naumburg Master in the 1230s, which in turn could be linked to the formal approach of Radovan; in one work that can possibly be attributed to the hand of the former, the 'Nativity' of the choir screen at Chartres **(fig.98)**, the intricate but sturdy description of the animals strongly resembles that used by the Dalmatian sculptor is his 'Nativity' lunette **(fig.61)**.[86] While a direct relationship can probably not be implied, Radovan's take on contemporary modes – arguably more sophisticated, in fact, than that at San Marco – might actually suggest that his work predates the Venetian 'Labours', if not by a substantial margin.

In the 'Virtues and Beatitudes' of the second archivolt's extrados, the formal approach moves away from the Antelamesque to a deeper response to the Île-de-France, although the translation varies in its success. The rippling, plastically-defined locks of hair and fluid draperies in the figures of 'Patience' and 'Fortitude'

[86] For the 'Naumburg Master', see Brush 1983, pp.109-122; p.114 for the Chartres choir screen.

(fig.20), for example, evoke both the 'Virtues and Vices' of the central portal of west façade at Notre-Dame in Paris **(fig.99)** and the 'Beatitudes' of Chartres; yet in the case of 'Compunction' **(fig.19)**, the disproportionately large feet and lack of articulation in the limbs is distinctly ungainly. In contrast, the pose and classicising fluidity of the figure of 'Humility' display clear analogies with the drawing of the same virtue in Villard de Honnecourt's famous sketchbook **(fig.100)**.[87] The latter, a work of circa 1235, not only reflects current trends in the French Gothic but also a vital means of dissemination; and it may not be unreasonable to suppose that the sculptors at San Marco made use of a similar pattern book. In this sense, their 'Virtues and Beatitudes' probably represent a copy of northern European modes with relatively few degrees of separation; and I would propose that a date of the late 1240s or early 1250s is not untenable.

It is in the 'Trades Reliefs' on the third archivolt's intrados **(figs.23-37)**, however, that we find the fullest and most accomplished reflection of the classicism of the northern Gothic approach. The expressive profile of the 'Proto' figure in the first relief **(fig.23)** bears comparison with the head of the female mourner in the 'Death of the Virgin' scene in the tympanum of the west door of the south transept portal at Strasbourg Cathedral **(fig.101)**, a work of circa 1225-1230; and in its physiognomy and headdress the 'Proto' also closely reflects the left-hand figure in the relief depicting the 'Story of Job' at Nôtre-Dame in Paris **(fig.102)**. Additionally, the small lion heads that are positioned at the bottom of each of the 'Trade Reliefs' recall those used on a ledge supporting a statue of Daniel on the *Goldene Pforte* of Freiberg Cathedral of circa 1230-40 **(fig.103)**. Here, too, a

[87] For Villard's model book, see Scheller 1963, pp.5, 88-94. For possible links between it and the mosaics of the south aisle, especially 'The Sermon in the Garden,' see Muraro 1985, p.20; and for the still debated links between the mosaic 'Virtues' of the cupola of the Ascension and those of the main portal, as well as a further exposition of the possible connections with see Nôtre-Dame and Chartres, see Ibid, p.42; Cochetti Pratesi 1960, pp.14-16.

process of influence through a time span of slightly more than a decade cannot be discounted.

I would suggest, however, that one valid point of comparison for the 'Trade Reliefs' might be presented by the so-called 'Reims Heads' or 'Reims Masks', a cycle of corbel sculptures on the outside of Reims Cathedral **(fig.104)**. Their facial types reflect a stylised take on earlier classicising production in the Île-de-France, and although the arguments are various, they can probably be dated to the period immediately before or after a hiatus in sculptural work at Reims between the years 1233 and 1252.[88] Interestingly, during that period the Reims workshop appears to have sought work elsewhere. Williamson, for example, proposes that from 1233 to 1237 it operated at Bamberg, where it played a key role in training other sculptors from farther afield.[89] Like the use of pattern books, the role of itinerancy in the diffusion of contemporary modes can certainly not be undervalued; and both might account for the small yet significant time lag in the registering of the impact of the French Gothic at San Marco.

It is important to underline, though, that the 'Trade Reliefs' are as an accomplished a work as any of their formal precedents in the Île-de-France. This is especially pronounced on the compositional level. The figures are arranged on two or even three planes, the front elements pulling away from the backdrop with superb plasticity and the rear surface functioning as an economical frame for the attributes that link the artisan subjects to their particular activity. Above all, though, the handling of the figures constitutes a refined response to *all'antica* modes. The facial types and monumental, almost heroic poses evoke classical sarcophagi; and while specific models cannot be proposed in the manner of the Camposanto reliefs

[88] The Reims Heads remain a subject for more intensive study. For preliminary observations, see Sauerländer 1989, pp.445-471; Wadley 1984.
[89] Williamson 1995, p.174.

that served as exempla for Nicola Pisano, the potential impact of late antique remains in the lagoon area, in particular at Aquileia, should not be discounted, nor should that of early Christian modes filtered through Byzantine production.[90]

The deep registering of antiquity in the 'Trade Reliefs', in fact, may also have been influenced by another area of production that placed classical sculpture through a Gothic filter: Frederick II's south. At Castel del Monte (c.1240-1246), for instance, a mensole figure **(fig.105)** displays similar handling to the figures in the 'Trade Reliefs', with fully rounded cheeks and a carefully drilled fringe of hair curls at the forehead. Interestingly, it also sports the same close-fitting cap as one of the artisans at San Marco, the young barrel hoop bearer in the slab depicting the coopers (*cerchai*) **(fig.33)**, suggesting some sense of chronologically proximity.

The formal and technical heritage of the Apulian south may also be a vital cultural link between the 'Trade Reliefs' and the output of the Pisani and Arnolfo di Cambio, and here, in fact, the visual analogies are striking. The head of the young man on the lower right of the relief of the shipwrights (*marangoni da nave*) **(fig.24)**, for example, closely resembles that of a male figure on a fragment of a fountain executed by Arnolfo di Cambio in 1277 now in the National Gallery of Umbria **(fig.106)**. While it would be anachronistic to propose a direct connection, it could at least be argued that the 'Trade Reliefs' are paradigmatic examples of a pre-Pisano approach to *all'antica* forms, and that dating them to the early- to mid-1250s is altogether appropriate, with the latter, arguably, being the more convincing proposition.

When compared to the consummately *all'antica* approach of the 'Trade Reliefs', the sculptures of the third extrados mark a distinct formal departure. The flattened,

[90] For the direct impact of the antique on the 'Trade Reliefs', see also Zucchetta 1990, p.165.

softly-moulded forms of the 'Prophets and Sibyls' (**figs.21,22**) and the decorative intricacy of the perforated bosses do indeed bear comparison with the work of the *cantiere* led by the 'Master of Heracles', which at this time was in all likelihood engaged in the sculptural decoration of the north and south façades, and it is not to be excluded that his workshop collaborated on the finishing stages of the main portal. This, of course, has implications for the dating of the 'Prophets and Sibyls.' As we saw above, the work of the 'Master of Heracles,' with one key example being the north facade's Porta dei Fiori (**fig.65**), can be tenably placed within the 1260s, with the essentially planar handling of its figurative elements evoking Byzantine forms at a time when the Paleologan retaking of Constantinople might have influenced Venice in visually reinforcing, as it were, her own claims in the former Latin east. In these terms, a similar rationale could be applied to the 'Prophets and Sibyls' themselves, thus placing them to some point after 1261 but before the treaty of 1268, which restablised relations between Venice and the new Byzantine administration.[91]

The difficulty with this reading, though, is to correlate it with the material evidence of the third archivolt. As noted above, the sculptures of both its extrados and intrados are carved from the same Marmara marble as the previous four bands of reliefs, thus implying that they too are likely to have been produced *prior* to 1261. How, then, to balance this factor against the indisputable stylistic change that we can perceive within the 'Prophets and Sibyls'? In the event, the balance of classicising and Byzantine forms could be simply interpreted as a contemporary trend. The output of the workshop led by the 'Master of Heracles' undoubtedly crystallises the tendency; but since the *cantiere* must have already been established in order to be drawn in to contribute to the main portal, and since, crucially, it appears to have turned its attention to the south façade only after 1268 – a time

[91] Demus 1960, p.146. See also discussion above.

when its Byzantinising slant need no longer be interpreted as a necessary political statement – one could view the approach on the 'Prophets and Sibyls' as simply a reflection of a stylistic sea-change.

If anything, in fact, the characterisation of the male 'Prophets' **(fig.22)** in particular is ahead of its time. In fact it could be offered that their flattened, linear draperies evoke the busts of the 'Prophets' and 'Evangelists' on the pinnacles of Pisa Baptistery, a cycle executed by Nicola Pisano's workshop at some point in the 1270s **(fig.107)**. While, like Muraro, I would suggest that any attempt to frame the Venetian 'Prophets' in direct relation to Pisano's output could only be forced, what the analogy illustrates is the fact that *all'antica* forms could be put through a Byzantine filter, and this independent of any political motivation.[92] As such, dating the 'Prophets and Sibyls' to the years immediately prior to 1261 – in other words very shortly before the execution of the west facade mosaics – appears to be a tenable proposition.

Here, then, we can come to some preliminary conclusions: that the formal evidence supports the structural, historical and material factors to suggest that the sculptural decoration of the main portal was undertaken in a sustained campaign of works that started in the years of Giacomo Tiepolo's reign, continued through the short dogado of his successor, Marino Morosini, and ended in the years when Ranier Zeno's administration reached its apex. Although such a reading can only be speculative, it does give a firmer framework for the consideration of the reliefs of the main portal, and this on two principal counts. Firstly, it allows for the incremental stylistic and technical progression that can be perceived through the three archivolts, thus contradicting the notion of an unreasonably tight time frame

[92] Muraro quite rightly rejects the out-moded notion that the San Marco 'Prophets' are later copies of those of Giovanni Pisano's workshop at Pisa Baptistery, as well as the rather forced argument that members of the Tuscan workshop may have been present at San Marco. Muraro 1985, p.53.

for the sculptural work of the main portal as a whole. Secondly, the notion of a span of activity from the 1220s to circa 1261 becomes more viable if one removes certain unsustainable criteria from the equation, two of which, as I have suggested, are the Treasury fire of 1231 and the purported direct relationship between San Marco and Radovan's output at Trogir.

Most importantly for our purposes, however, the discussion so far has given us a firmer base for the analysis of the 'Trade Reliefs.' If their dating to the later 1250s does not constitute a radical departure from the existing state of studies, it is a significant one; and now it is opportune to turn our attention to the other cycle of sculptures that can be linked to them thematically, the Piazzetta column bases, to determine whether there is also basis for chronological reconsideration.

The Piazzetta Column Bases

In comparison to the 'Trade Reliefs' of San Marco, the Piazzetta column bases **(figs.39-46)** have been subject to relatively little study, arguably on the grounds of their precarious state of conservation. In terms of their dating, however, their analysis has above all been framed within the bounds provided by the Venetian historiographical tradition. Sanudo, for example, recounts that the Piazzetta columns **(fig.38)** were *spolia* from the east, imported into Venice but initially left unraised because nobody had the technical expertise to carry out such a feat. In 1172, the situation was resolved by Nicolò Barattieri, a Lombard sculptor recently arrived in Venice, who undertook to achieve the seemingly impossible in return for doge Sebastiano Ziani's promise to have gambling, otherwise illegal in Venice, permissible between the two columns once he had successfully raised them into position.[93]

[93] See, for example, Sanudo 1900, vol.1, p.283 n.5; BM, Marc.It.Cl.VII, 2051, c.17 A.

This version of events has made its way into art history, with most scholars subscribing to the view that the Piazzetta column bases were carved in the later part of the twelfth century. Muraro, for instance, proposes that the bases actually pre-date the raising of the columns, possibly being carved as early as the 1160s by what he loosely terms as 'maestri occidentali';[94] and Demus, Salvadori and Polacco regard them as an echo of precedents such as the work of Wiligelmo and Antelami, an underlay possibly put through a Byzantinising filter.[95] In these terms, the Piazzetta column bases would constitute an important instance of the early impact of the Lombardesque and Emilian-Romagnan schools in Venice, as well as a precedent for the 'Trade Reliefs' of the main portal.

Two scholars, though, who have challenged this traditional gloss are Schulz and Tigler, and they do so on both the historiographical and material level. Schulz, for instance, argues that the role traditionally credited to Sebastiano Ziani in the development of the *Insula Sancti Marci* may, in the event, have been considerably overplayed. Certainly Ziani appears to have been responsible for channelling his considerable wealth into several projects: he enlarged the area of the Piazza, an undertaking that had been started by his predecessor Vitale Michiel, as well as starting the renovation of the Ducal Palace and the construction of offices for the procurators of San Marco.[96] As such, the raising of the two columns may have been simply, as Schulz puts it, drawn into 'un pasticcio di fatti pertienti a persone ed epoche diverse.'[97]

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[94] Muraro 1981, p.8.
[95] Demus 1960, pp.85, 117-118; Salvadori 1986, p.39; Polacco 1984, p.68. For similar views, see also Scarfi 1990, p.111; Perocco 1979, p.59.
[96] See, for example, BM, *Cronaca di Giovanni Bon*, Cl.7, cod.126, c.97; cited as doc.820 in Cecchetti 1886, p.210. For Ziani's involvement in the Piazza works, see also Schulz 1992-1993, pp.135, 151 n.16; Polacco 1994, pp.62-64; Muraro 1981, pp.7-8; Luzzatto 1961, p.21.
[97] Schulz 1992-1993, p.136.

It is Tigler, however, who makes an even more significant case, stating that the materials of the column bases actually indicates that they were produced almost a century *after* Sebastiano Ziani's dogado. His theory centres on the material evidence provided by the Piazzetta columns and their socles, for while the former are made of two types of granite, one violet and one red, the latter are made of Istrian marble. The reasons for this were essentially political, and constitute a neat reversal of the logic we applied above to the third archivolt of the main portal. In 1261, Venetian access to Marmara marble was compromised by the Paleologan retaking of Constantinople, forcing the recourse to the unrestricted quarries of Istria, which, in fact, came definitively into Venetian control six years later. Tigler argues, then, that Istrian stone would only have been used as a necessary substitute for the better quality Marmara marble, thus placing the carving of the column bases to some point in the 1260s.[98]

In some senses, though, Tigler's theory could be extended to imply an even later date for the Piazzetta socles. Firstly, as Lieberman points out, Istrian stone continued to be used in Venice even after the treaty of 1268, which somewhat stabilised relations between the Republic and Constantinople.[99] Could access to the Marmara quarries have continued to be compromised, especially in the light of Venice's enduring conflict with the Genoese, whose interests were favoured by the new Paleologan administration? Secondly, the earliest specific references to the columns themselves date to 1283, when the Great Council ordered the extension of the Molo;[100] and to 1293, when it issued a deliberation regarding the repair or alteration of the bronze sculpture of the winged lion on top of one of them: '*Item, quod Leo, qui est supra columpnam, debeat aptari de denarijs qui accipientur de*

[98] Tigler 1999-2000, pp.1-3 and n.3. For a similar if less comprehensive version of this argument, see also Rizzi 2001, p.20; Zuliani 1994, p.82.
[99] Lieberman 1991, p.125. For the treaty of 1268, see Pincus 1984, pp.48, 55 n.55 and discussion above.
[100] '*Item, quod rippa, que est supra canale ante ducale pallatium, possit ellevari incipiendo a columnis et conducendo, sicut videbitur.*' Cited in Cessi 1931, III, p.28 and n.54. See also Rizzi 2001, p.20; Schulz 1992-1993, p.150 n.7.

gratia vini et lignaminis.'[101] These, then, offer a broad *terminus ante quem* for the raising of the columns, and therefore implicitly if not explicitly the carving of their bases.

Other evidence, though, suggests that placing the Piazzetta column base carvings within the reign of Ranier Zeno is a tenable supposition. Martino Da Canal, for instance, makes no mention of the Piazzetta columns in his *Éstoires*, an omission, as Schulz points out, that cannot be easily explained if not for the fact that they had not yet been put into place.[102] But here two countering factors could be offered. Firstly, it must be borne in mind that the earlier part of the *Éstoires* – where we find this particular passage – was probably undertaken under direct commission from doge Zeno himself; and arguably Martino, continuing his narration into the reign of Lorenzo Tiepolo, simply did not make the revision. Secondly, it appears to have been Ranier Zeno, not his successor, who appears to have played the crucial part in works of civic improvement that were undertaken in the *Insula Sancti Marci*, foremost amongst them the structural change to the cupolas of the basilica and the paving of the *brolio*, a work of huge ambition – and presumably high cost – that probably took place around 1266.[103] Could the Piazzetta columns have been raised, and their bases carved, around the same time?

If one supposes that the Piazzetta bases were indeed carved in the reign of Zeno, and this certainly seems likely, a valuable approach to the problem of their chronology would be to compare them the 'Trade Reliefs' themselves. Given their shared robust classicism – even the difficulty in reading the socle sculptures does

[101] Cessi 1931, III, p.339. Cited in Tigler 1999-2000, p.15-16 n.27; Rizzi 2001, pp.20, 25 n.1.
[102] Schulz 1992-1993, p.136. For a similar view, see Rizzi 2001, p.20.
[103] Various dates are given to the project of paving of the *brolio*. One chronicle, for example, cites 1262 (BM, *Cronaca anonimo del secolo XV*, Cl.7, cod.37, c.42. Cited as doc.827 in Cecchetti 1886, p.211); and without stating his sources, Demus proposes a date of 1264-1265. Demus 1960, p.101 n.163. For the date of 1266, see Fortini Brown 1996, p.18; Perocco 1979, p.59; Franzoi 1976, p.317; Mueller 1971, p.113.

not obfuscate the plasticity of their figurative elements – Schlink, for one, argues that the two cycles were executed at more or less the same time.[104] Even Tigler, in fact, sees a formal analogy between the two cycles, proposing that the Piazzetta sculptures were executed by a less accomplished pupil of the 'Master of the Mestieri', 'cronologicamente ormai abbastanza lontano dal momenti dell'attività del maestro.'[105] Here, though, there are two problems. First, Tigler's argument rather invalidates his own notion that some chronological gap could not have separated the archivolts of the main portal itself; and second, even he is forced to state that a date of the 1260s for the Piazzetta socles might scotch his own chronology for the Trade Reliefs: 'o gli zoccoli di Piazza San Marco vanno datati sul 1245, quando credo essere stato ultimato il portale, oppure....questa mia datazione dell'arco dei Mestieri non è corretta.'[106]

In the event, I would argue that the style of the Piazzetta carvings, even in their ruinous state, sits comfortably with a date of the early to mid-1260s, in other words shortly after the 'Trade Reliefs' at San Marco. While their weighty classicising bears less relation to the Antelamesque than to the plastic modes of the circle of the Pisani – with a salient example, I suggest, being presented by the reclining same male figure from Arnolfo's fountain at Perugia cited above **(fig.106)** – It is true that the translation of the quasi-heroic antique forms of the 'Trade Reliefs' into almost freestanding sculptures is slightly ungainly.[107] Clearly a different *cantiere* may have been at work, and one that, like that of the 'Trade Reliefs' immediately before it, heralded classicising developments in Tuscany. Overall, in fact, the Piazzetta column bases might represent a not altogether successful development of the cycle at the basilica; but their closeness to the 'Trade Reliefs' in theme and chronology

[104] Schlink 1985, pp.33-44.
[105] Tigler 1999-2000, p.11.
[106] Tigler 1999-2000, p.11.
[107] The 'Assetata' is now in the Galleria Nazionale dell'Umbria in Perugia.

might, as the rest of this study aims to demonstrate, be mirrored by a similar motivation.

Conclusions

All in all, the sculptures of the Piazzetta column bases can be directly linked to those of the main portal, but this by means of an alternative trajectory to that usually proposed. The socle carvings were almost certainly not produced in the late-twelfth century but instead in the early- to mid- 1260s, thus rendering them the immediate successors, not the predecessors, to the iconographically similar cycle at the basilica itself.

Determining the date of the 'Trade Reliefs' themselves, however, is a more complex undertaking, as it demands placing them in the context of the main portal as a whole. In this chapter I have suggested that by rejecting, accepting or revising previous scholarly theories and incorporating new observations, one can set out a tenable chronological sequence. Work on the three archivolts could have started as early as the 1210s, or certainly by the 1220s, and it was finished by the time the Quadriga was put into position and the west facade mosaics were executed, in other words before 1268; yet given the evidence of the transept mosaics and the material used for the sculptures themselves, it is more likely that this outer limit can be brought forward to 1261. The stylistic, technical and iconographical progression throughout the six bands of reliefs argues for an extended chronological span, with the 'Trade Reliefs' themselves being within reasonable doubt the product of the early- to mid- 1250s, quite possibly within the first years of Ranier Zeno's dogado. The question that we must now examine is whether it could indeed have been the subjects of the two cycles of urban work, Venice's artisans and traders, who instigated their creation, and this will be the scope of the next chapter.

Chapter Three

Guild Patronage at San Marco?

Status Association and the Medieval Civic Collective

Introduction: 'Status Association' and the Arti

In his *Tradesmen and Traders*, Richard Mackenney has this to say about the 'Trade Reliefs' at San Marco:

> ....public life did not create a hierarchy amongst the guilds. Processing or just walking around the Basilica and the Ducal Palace, guildsmen could see a figure of Christ giving his blessing not to saints but to boat-makers, bakers, butchers, vintners, builders, barbers, coopers, carpenters, blacksmiths and fishermen – all humble, all exalted in the material fabric of the city....Industry was sanctified in the Church and honoured in the state in an obvious and permanent fashion.[1]

For Mackenney, the message the 'Trade Reliefs' were intended to promote is key to their importance. He regards them as the visual manifestation of a concept he dubs 'status association,' namely the way the government integrated 'ordinary Venetians' into the civic structure by involving them in situations and places closely identified with the state itself.[2] For Mackenney, the most obvious example of status association was also the most visible: the grand ritual processions that punctuated the Venetian calendar. Here the hierarchies of the city were mapped, as it were, in a manner aimed to make them clear to both the participants themselves and their

[1] Mackenney 1987, p.140.
[2] Ibid, p.159.

audience.[3] What these rituals amounted to was not only a cohesive display of Venice's pretensions to the status of a political and apostolic paradigm. It was also an expression of both a proud collectivity and carefully-delineated social divisions, or, as Muir puts it in his defining study *Civic Ritual in Renaissance Venice*, 'a carefully arranged portrait of a remarkably well-ordered society.'[4]

By connecting the 'Trade Reliefs' to this civic imaging, Mackenney places them within a very useful context. According to his reading, they served a practical and symbolic function, proclaiming a message that work was both useful to the city and worthy of being honoured at the church whose *patronus et gubernator* was the doge himself. Mackenney does not, however, state his position on the question of who set out this lesson in stone. Was it, as art historians have tended to maintain, a direct guild commission? Or were the 'Trade Reliefs' positioned at the main portal as part of a politic and political stance on the behalf of the state itself?

It is here that careful definitions are of the utmost importance, for the act of patronage implies substantial impact within the civic framework as well as autonomy of action. But were Venice's trade guilds in such a position at the time the 'Trade Reliefs', and indeed the Piazzetta column bases, were produced? This, then, is the question that will underpin the next part of the discussion; and I will argue that when we deconstruct the outward trappings of a well-oiled machine, what is exposed is a framework of exacting governmental regulation that placed the collective good over individual gain. In the process, what should become clear is that this political model underwent the most intensive development in the thirteenth

[3] In the Renaissance period, the *arti* were obliged to participate in the processions on St. Mark's Day and at Corpus Christi, and were permitted to process on other occasions depending on the profession of their collective. Ibid, pp.140,159.
[4] Muir 1981, p.8.

century itself, before, during and after the period in which the 'Trade Reliefs' and the Piazzetta column bases were executed.

In the first part of the chapter I will examine the contemporary context of the *arti*, placing particular emphasis on the matter of their regulation within the medieval economy. Next, I will place this evidence within the context of the political processes that took place in the course of the duecento, especially in the build up to the *serrata* of 1297, which effectively sealed Venice's governance as the prerogative of a patrician minority. What light do these events shed on the role of the city's tradesmen and artisans within the civic structure? And how did they fit into what was beyond a doubt the driving governmental agenda: that of constructing and maintaining a firm status quo?

The Arti and Historiography

In order to give a suitable frame for such an analysis, it is revealing to examine the slant that Venice's own internal mythologising placed on the relationship between workers and state. In later centuries, Venetian commentators framed the Republic's economic glory as the product of a fair dialectic between a merchant oligarchy and the city's artisans and tradesmen. In one text that had wide circulation in sixteenth-century Europe – Gasparo Contarini's *De magistratibus et republica Venetorum* – the case is put in a particularly representative manner:

> *....from the first beginning till this time of ours it [the state] hath remained safe and free this thousand and two hundred years, not only from the domination of Straungers, but also from all civile and intestine sedition of any moment and weight, which it hath not accomplished by any violent force, armed garrisons or fortified towers, but onely by a just and*

temperate manner of ruling, insomuch that the people do obey the nobilitie with a gentle and willing obedience, full of love and affection, and farre from the desire of any straunge change.[5]

In a speech made to the Great Council two centuries later, Filippo Memmo developed the paradigm further. For him Venice's lack of political turmoil was the result of the government channelling the aspirations of the populace into well-delineated collectives, thus removing the greatest threat to the status quo, that of dissatisfaction:

Forse poi quella permanente quiete nella quale restò fin dal suo principio la veneta aristocrazia, quiete per il corso di cinque secoli tanto ammirata da tutti quelli che rifletterono sulla prudente costituzione del governo nostro, derivò in gran parte da lasciarsi o da procurarsi al popolo una qualche immagine di governo...Infatti quell'unirsi in assemblea, quell'ellegger capi, quel destinar cariche, quel proponer parti, quel disputar liberamente tra membri delle medesime Arti, sono tutti quasi certi caratteri che introducono nel popolo una forma di piccole repubbliche, che con esse si appaga nella propria ambizione, con che crede di aver parte negli affari, con che si affezziona al governo dei nobili, contento di tramandar queste sue idee quasi come una eredità nei suoi figli.[6]

Memmo and Contarini's proud declarations set out a clear and unruffled historical trajectory to civic stability; yet as seductive as it is, this view of an urban utopia

[5] Contarini 1551, p.131 (trans.Lewkenor 1599, p.146). Cited in Muir 1981, pp.40-41. For Contarini, see also Mackenney 2000, pp.172-173 and n.3; Pullan 1974, pp.4-5, 7; Gilmore 1973, pp.431-434; Gaeta 1961, pp.63, 65-68, 71.
[6] For Memmo's speech, see also Dal Borgo 1989, p.15; Favaro 1975, p.11.

was, to cite Muir once more, a 'commonplace' at the heart of the Myth of Venice.[7] Accordingly, the research of historians such as Mackenney, Pullan, Cracco, Lane and Romano deconstructs not only the Myth itself – as the last defines it, 'the idea, propagated and fostered by the Venetians themselves, that their city was free from the civil strife that plagued other cities' – but also its remarkably enduring core ideas.[8] The question they pose, in fact, is whether the model of an orderly, obedient working population content to operate within the limits of its 'little republics' is anything other than the product of centuries of self-reflexive glossing. And when we tie this stance into the analysis of the 'Trade Reliefs' and Piazzetta column bases, at the time they were produced could the situation of their supposed patrons, the medieval trade guilds, in fact reflect an infinitely more complex reality?

The Documentary Evidence: Considerations and Cautions

Before embarking on such a discussion, it is imperative to underline the care required when examining the sources relating to the thirteenth-century *arti*. While a relatively large body of primary documentation survives, namely a swathe of Great Council rulings and the corpus of guild statutes from the state archive, the use of this evidence needs to be set within firm parameters.

First, it should be borne in mind that the statutes were the product of a process of development that took place over a considerable chronological span. The first set of *capitolari* were issued in 1219 by the presiding authority, the *giustizia*, to be followed in the course of the thirteenth century by fifty or so more, with the most intensive activity spanning the years 1261 to 1278; as we saw in Chapter One, in fact, it was in the latter period that most of the guilds of the 'Trade Reliefs' received

[7] Muir 1981, p.40.
[8] Romano 1987, p.4.

their statutes.[9] In itself, however, the fact that each set of *capitolari* was far from a static product raises problems for their analysis, especially as it is difficult to be certain of the precise date of the rulings they contain. An initial revision of the corpus appears to have taken place in the years 1278 to 1288, for instance; moreover each original set of *capitolari* was progressively enlarged by various additions, some of which are dated, many of which are not. Yet the motivation for many of these *addizioni* does not appear to have been always to create a new set of structures; those from the early-fourteenth century onwards, example, appear to have been inserted merely to translate pre-existing clauses from Latin into the *volgare* to increase comprehension amongst the guildsmen, thus reinforcing their observance of the measures to which their working existence was subject.[10]

Even with this reservation in mind, however, the very nature of this process of internal revision makes it difficult to be certain of the precise correlation between the statutes and the actual situation of the *arti*, especially when one ties in the potential risk of anachronism.

The inherent negativity of this observation, however, is arguably attenuated by one of the most obvious characterisations of the statute corpus: that the *capitolari* tended to codify pre-existing norms, known in medieval Venice as *consuetudini*.[11] To

[9] See also Chapter One. To reiterate: *segadori* (sawyers, 1262), *ternieri* (oil and fat sellers, 1263), the *barbieri* (barbers, December 1270), the *calzolai* (cobblers, November 1271), the *falegnami* (carpenters/marangoni da casa November 1271), the *carpentieri* (shipwrights/marangoni da nave/falegnami da nave, November 1271), the *calafati* (caulkers, November 1271), the *muratori* (builders, November 1271), the *fabbri* (ironsmiths, December 1271) and the *bottai* or *botteri* (coopers, December 1271). The other guilds that had their statutes in 1271 were: the phial-makers (*fioleri* [1270 *more veneto*]), the furriers (*pelliciai d'opera vecchia e nuova*), the bleachers (*biancarii/imbiancatori di pelli*), the mercers (*merciai*), the painters (*pittori*), the tanners (*conciatori di pelli e corami*), the corn chandlers (*biadaroli*). For a full list of all the statutes and their dates, see Monticolo 1997, pp.17-19. See also Dorigo 1988, p.22 and n.2.

[10] For the redactions and *addizioni*, see Costantini 1989, p.31. In 1530, a dedicated body, the *Cinque Savii sopra le mariegole et mestieri*, was created by the Council of Ten to supervise the process of revision. See Manno 1997, pp.24, 30 n.65.

[11] For this point, see in particular Dal Borgo 1989, p.15; Cassandro 1973, p.185.

illustrate the point, let us briefly turn away from the guild statutes to those that were of consummate importance within the civic collective, the *statuti civili*. These, a collection of rulings relating to the upholding of the social framework – especially in regard to the transferral of real estate – had been originally formulated by the late-twelfth century, probably as a move promoted by doge Sebastiano Ziani. In the first half of the thirteenth century, however, the corpus underwent no less than three revisions, the first two under doges Enrico Dandolo and Pietro Ziani, and the third and definitive, that of Giacomo Tiepolo in 1242, going on to underwrite Venice's legal system for the duration of the Republic.

The chief interest of the *statuti civili* for our purposes, however, is the motivation that underpinned the process of codification and revision: the perceived need to consolidate *consuetudini* that were already in force. The case is stated explicitly in the prologue to Pietro Ziani's edition:

> *....et que per predecessores nostros et que pro nostre solicitudinis providentia promulgata noscuntur, ad maiorem eorum efficiaciam in scriptis mandavimus redigenda.*[12]

Here, then, there is an emphasis on enforceable continuities rather than on radical change, and the model would prove to be of remarkable durability within Venice's constitutional and civic framework.

Like the civic statutes, though, the guild *capitolari* were by definition state-issued documents. This, of course, carries its own interpretative risk. How can we know the extent to which the rulings they set out were actually observed by those they

[12] Besta and Predelli 1901, p.15.

were intended to govern?[13] Yet it could be argued that the corpus of *capitolari* requires analysis above all in terms of the ideals that underscored it. After all, rules by definition speak more about those that issue them than those they governed; and it is this factor that might shed light on whether or not there was a dichotomy between ideal and real in Venice's medieval guild framework.

Workers and State: Commerce, Manufacture and Industry

A discussion of economic regulation in Venice needs to be carefully defined, especially when one ties in the matter of how it might relate to the 'Trade Reliefs.' For the outside observer – the intended audience, one could argue, of the rather bragging declarations of Contarini and Memmo – the Republic's success-story was defined by its luxury trade in the silks, spices and other commodities that flowed into the city from the east. The sculptures at San Marco, though, along with those of the Piazzetta column bases, present an altogether more internalised image of domestic industry and manufacture as well as the commerce in foodstuffs. The viewer here, as well as the subject, was just as much the workforce involved in these intrinsically more humble activities as the admiring external visitor.

As we saw in Chapter One, in fact, there has been some debate as to why the luxury trades are so notably absent in the 'Trade Reliefs' and Piazzetta column bases; yet when we relate the question to the very nature of Venice's medieval economy, some preliminary observations can be drawn. Firstly, the import, export and commerce in such high-end goods were essentially the preserve of a mercantile aristocracy composed both of established noble families, the *grandi*, and the new aristocracy, the *nuovi* or *popolari*, who had traded their way to political fortune through *colleganze*, agreements in which one or more parties shared both the risks and the

[13] As Mackenney warns, 'the pronouncements they embody may not have been reflected in enforcement.' Mackenney 1987, p.9.

profits in trading voyages overseas.[14] Secondly, unlike in other cities in the Italian peninsula – Florence being a case in point – Venice's merchants never formed guilds, for there was simply no need: they were at the helm of government itself.[15] In itself, then, the choice of subjects in the 'Trade Reliefs' and Piazzetta column bases implies a more subtle enquiry: how the artisans and lesser tradesmen of the medieval city were successfully tied into the aspirations of this merchant oligarchy.

With this in mind, let us outline how the domestic working population was structured within governmental policy. Broadly speaking, the regulatory framework fell into four principal areas: the trade in foodstuffs, the service industries, handicraft and manufacture, and industrial production.

The commerce in food was of obvious importance in a city that by the end of the thirteenth century was already one of the largest in Europe.[16] Venice was divided into sixty or so parishes, each of which had its own small market to serve the needs of the local community. In addition, several larger centres for food trading were placed at key locations throughout the city. Of these, the oldest appears to have been at Piazza di Olivolo, a nucleus that provided food and goods for the community of arsenal workers that developed at the edge of the lagoon near Venice's cathedral at San Pietro in Castello. A weekly market also took place in Campo San Polo, and stalls were set up on a daily basis at San Giovanni in Bragora, primarily, it seems, to serve the needs of the constant influx of sailors who docked nearby.[17]

[14] For an outline of the working of the *colleganze*, see Howard 2000, pp.62-63; Mueller 1971, p.157; Luzzatto 1961, pp.21-24, 81-91.
[15] For this point, see especially Romano 1987, p.7 and n.24 p.160; Lane 1971, p.243.
[16] See Lane 1973, p.12.
[17] For the market at Piazza di Olivolo, see CAV II, pp.liii-liv; Agostinelli 1995, p.33. For San Polo and San Giovanni in Bragora, Ibid, pp.135-136.

It was indisputably the Rialto, though, that was Venice's principal market.[18] It was probably founded in the ninth century, and by the early years of the thirteenth, it had become the setting for a potent mix of high-level transactions and those in the stuff of everyday life. All luxury foreign imports had to be traded there, and at tables set up in the portico of the *banco giro* next to the church of San Giacomo, money changers operated and patrician merchants dealt in *colleganze*, as well as in *commende*, private investments in local business ventures such as shares and ownership in shops and workshops, the *botteghe*, and market stalls, *stazi*.[19]

The chief activity at the Rialto, though, was undoubtedly the trade in foodstuffs. The fishermen, the *pescatori*, brought their wicker baskets of catch by boat to the bank of the Grand Canal, selling on to the *compravendi*, the wholesale buyers. The fish was then traded on to the fishmongers, the *pescivendoli*, for trade at the fish-market, the *pescaria*.[20] Animal carcasses – in the earlier centuries slaughtered on the Giudecca and at San Giobbe – were brought to the Rialto market to be portioned off and sold; grain, wine and oil was traded with the relevant state-approved weights, measures, containers and barrels in the *botteghe*; and at the fruit and vegetable market, the *erberia*, fresh produce filled the *stazi*.[21] The whole effect would have not been dissimilar to that of today: a bustling commercial hub, teeming with a morass of sellers, customers and a seemingly endless variety of commodities to hawk, peruse, accept or reject; and it is significant that by the 1220s a wooden

[18] For the history and formation of the Rialto markets, Ibid, pp.12-18, 33, 36-37, 55-136; Crouzet-Pavan 1992, p.173; Tassini 1988, pp.68-69, 494; Salvadori 1973, pp.609-641; Cessi and Alberti 1934.
[19] For the *Banco giro*, see Agostinelli et al 1995, pp.42-44; Tassini 1988, p.51; Luzzatto 1954, p.208. For the moneychangers, see Lane and Mueller 1985, p.149.
[20] For the distinction between the *pescatori*, *compravendi* and *pescivendoli*, see Gramigna and Perissa 1981, p.67. A stone *pescaria* was first constructed in 1332, probably for reasons of hygiene, but a dedicated space for the selling of fish would have probably been in place from the time of the market's establishment in the ninth century. Agostinelli et al 1995, pp.55-67.
[21] For the *erberia*, which was paved in stone in 1398, Ibid, pp.71-72; for the public *becaria*, which was moved to Rialto in 1389, Ibid, p.90. See also Lane 1973, p.14; Schulz 1991, pp.425-428.

bridge had been built to connect the city's economic hub to the *Insula Sancti Marci*.[22]

Above all, the Rialto market illustrates the closeness of the connection between trade and politics in the medieval civic collective. Early sources make it clear that its control was used as a bargaining chip to generate governmental income, in the process ensuring its development from a 'private market into state enterprise.'[23] In the late- eleventh century, for instance, a substantial swathe of shops and stalls was donated into governmental ownership by two noble families, the Gradenigo and Orio; and a document of 1164 concedes '*omnes redditus nostri comunis qui in Rivoalto sunt*' to a group of patrician merchants, including the future doge Sebastiano Ziani, in return for a substantial loan to the communal coffers, a move regarded as worthy of consolidation under doge Pietro Ziani in 1207.[24] These transactions to the benefit of the state also operated at a more humble level. From the twelfth century, for instance, records demonstrate that the *pescatori* delivering their goods to the *compravendi* paid communal tithes or *dazi*; petty tradesmen at the *erberia* and *pescaria* rented their *stazi* and *botteghe*, from the commune on payment of rent and tithes, as did the moneychangers near San Giacomo.[25] Clearly the dialectic between governmental and economical concerns was one characterised by both control and revenue.

[22] The precise date of the first Rialto bridge is unknown. But as Schulz points out, a bridge of some kind would have probably been needed by the 1220s, when the state created a dedicated area for German traders at the *Fondaco dei Tedeschi* on the opposite bank of the Grand Canal. Ibid, pp.427-428.
[23] Schulz 1991 p.426. For the general trend for transfer from private to state ownership, see also Mueller 1997, pp.8, 36 n.2.
[24] For the document of 1164, see Schulz 1991, pp.426-427 and 426 n.23; Sanudo 1900 I p.277. For that of 1207, see BM, Cod.Marc.Lat.2803, n.16. Cited in Pozza 1996 as doc.5. For other examples of such transfers, see Robbert 1999, p.37.
[25] For the regulations governing such rentals, see Mueller 1997, p.36.

While the Rialto does appear to have been the main locus for trade in the medieval city, the Piazza di San Marco also occupied a position of prime importance, hosting, for example, the famous annual Ascension fair, a commercial tour-de-force probably established under doge Sebastiano Ziani towards the end of the twelfth century. It is important to underline, however, that commerce was also an everyday activity in the *Insula Sanct Marci*.[26] There was a large weekly market in the Piazza, and moreover on a daily basis foodstuffs were sold at *stazi* and *botteghe*, as well as within a dedicated *pescaria* and meat-market, the *becaria*; yet in addition to the stable trading posts, itinerant small-scale traders known as *ambulanti* plied their wares, with fruit and vegetables, for instance, being generally sold on the Molo at the water's edge.[27] What we can loosely term as the service industries also operated within the *Insula*: the smiths were based in the Calle dei fabbri, barbers, dentists and notaries gathered for business against the walls of the Ducal Palace, and money changers plied their trade around the base of the *campanile*.[28] The only spot that remained empty of this commercial melée was that defined by the two huge Piazzetta columns.[29] While this, according to tradition, was the single space in Venice where gambling was permitted, its primary role was the forum for public punishment and executions.[30] Like the trade in everyday commodities, the ritual enactment of justice was an intrinsic part of the collective experience.

This picture of a bustling commercial hub is one, of course, that is evocatively presented in the paintings of the eighteenth-century *vedutisti*. The problem, though,

[26] For the Ascension fair, the *Fiera de la Sensa*, see Crouzet-Pavan 1992, pp.942-943; Tassini 1988, p.40; Franzoi 1976, p.317; Luzzatto 1954, p.202.
[27] For the *stazi* and the *ambulanti*, see Agostinelli et al 1995, p.36. For the weekly Saturday market at San Marco, Ibid, pp.36, 135; Mueller 1997, p.77; Luzzatto 1954, p.202. For daily trade in the Piazza, see Gramigna and Perissa 1981, p.44; Lane 1973, p.13; Gattinoni 1910, p.325.
[28] For the original forms of the Ducal Palace and the Palazzo Comunale, see Schulz 1992-1993, pp.136-137. For the money changers, Lane and Mueller 1985, pp.152-153; Mueller 1997, pp.29, 41 n.23
[29] See discussion in Chapter Two.
[30] For the Piazzetta as a site of justice, see Loechel 1996, pp.487-488; Muir 1981, pp.245-249.

is to be certain of precisely when such activities – several of which appear in the 'Trade Reliefs' and Piazzetta column bases – actually commenced in the *Insula* on a structured basis, and as usual the documentation throws up its own set of cautions. From the early-fourteenth century onwards, Great Council rulings do mention the *pescaria* and the *becaria*, as do registers of rents paid to the state via the procurators of San Marco, the relevance of whose activity we shall examine in more detail in Chapter Four. But do such records reflect an *ad novo* situation, or, in lines with the prevalence of *consuetudini* within the medieval context, rather the formalisation of pre-existing norms in order to better control both the trading-spaces and those who operated within them?

I would argue that the latter reading might be the more appropriate, and to illustrate the point one can cite the case of one of the Piazza trades, the *panattaroli*. The visual evidence for the activities of the bread sellers runs from the 'Trade Reliefs' themselves to the evocative paintings of the eighteenth-century *vedutisti*, which show their wooden *botteghe* to have been concentrated around the base of the *campanile* and along the Piazzetta to the Molo.[31] With regard to documentation, however, the situation is patchy. To my knowledge, the only sources that survive date to the sixteenth century, when a series of rulings of the Great Council propose the removal of the *botteghe* since they were regarded as an eyesore.[32] Could one argue, however, that such rulings demonstrate a relationship between documental survival and situations perceived as requiring state intervention?

[31] As well as the best-known *vedustista*, Canaletto, others such as Luca Carlevarijs and Giovanni Vanvitelli executed detailed scenes of Venice with everyday transactions being carried out in the Piazza and at the Rialto. For the presence of the *panattaroli* at San Marco, see Gattinoni 1910, pp.319-320, 325-331.

[32] See, for example, a Senate decree of 1504. BM, Mss.It.Cl.VII, n.1718 (8657): '*Carte relative alla Procuratia di San Marco*', f.11r. It is interesting to note that in 1300 a similar approach had been proposed in the Great Council, but this time in relation to patrician sensibilities being offended by the city's vagrant paupers. See De Kiriaki 1906, p.16.

The lack of direct sources for the medieval period, though, is undoubtedly challenging for the analysis of the 'Trade Reliefs,' and ultimately it has led to negative judgments. Tigler, for example, argues that by default the sculpture of the *panattaroli* must depict the bread sellers of Rialto, since there is no contemporary citation of those at San Marco.[33] Here, though, one has to bear in mind two related factors. First, in the statutes of the bakers (*pistori*), which were granted to their guild – which also included the bread sellers – in the year 1333, the presence of *panattaroli* at San Marco is specifically cited.[34] Second, as we saw in Chapter One, some of the guilds were emphatically in existence *before* receiving their capitolari; not having statutes, then, does not represent evidence against their prior formation as trade associations.[35] In these terms, one could propose that the statutes of the *pistori* and *panattaroli* simply imply the formalisation of previous norms, and I would posit that the value of *consuetudine* within the Venetian civic collective is a matter regarding further investigation.

Interestingly, though, the 'Trade Reliefs' also include depictions of one area of manufacture that was emphatically removed from Rialto and San Marco: industrial construction. The stone cutters (*tagliapietra*) would have operated throughout the city – including, of course, at the basilica itself during the decoration campaign – as would the builders (*muratori*) and the domestic carpenters (*marangoni da casa*).[36] Even more significantly, however, another main industry shown in the sculptures, that of ship building, was also concentrated elsewhere; and here the connection between the domestic economy and state is particularly apparent. A large number of private boatyards or *squeri* were in existence from an early date all over the city; here independent artisans fulfilled orders for the merchants who invested in

[33] Tigler 1995, 1, p.282.
[34] CAV, III, pp.89-101.
[35] For this point, see Mackenney 2000, pp.177-178. See also discussion in Chapter One.
[36] For the building trades, see Cracco 1967, pp.41, 81; Besta and Predelli, II, 1901 pp.233-234; Caniato and Dal Borgo 1990; Luzzatto 1961, p.20; Cecchetti 1872, pp.235-238.

overseas trading ventures as well as for the commune itself.[37] In addition to the *squeri* there was, of course, the arsenal. While the first documented mention of an *arsena comunis* in Castello dates to 1206, tradition places its first establishment under doge Ordelaffo Falier a century before.[38] That a centralised base for governmentally-organised ship construction existed from an early date is probable, especially when we bear in mind the extent to which Venice's maritime capability was intrinsic to state security. The chronicles proudly report that by the time of the Fourth Crusade, the arsenal was efficient enough to produce seventy-two galleys and 140 supply ships in less than two years for the Frankish army;[39] and by the 1220s – the years in which an *arsana* begins to regularly appear in documents – its importance generated a series of governmental bodies and directives that specifically impacted its running.[40] A *servicium arsane et galearum* is documented in 1223;[41] in 1227 a ruling was introduced that forbade arsenal workers leaving Venice to seek work elsewhere;[42] and by the middle of the thirteenth century, a group of three supervisors, the *patroni arsenatus*, had been established to represent and enforce governmental interests.[43]

The state-led regulatory framework made clear by the case of the arsenal also impacted every other area of domestic trade and manufacture. It was particularly potent, for example, in the commerce in food at the Rialto and the city's other markets. At first, this appears to have been a matter of *consuetudine* rather than encoded *lex*. The first piece of documentary evidence to this effect is provided by a

[37] For the *squeri*, see Schulz 1991, pp.428-429; Cheridi 1980, pp.8-9; Luzzatto 1961, pp.22, 66.
[38] Brunello 1980-1981, p.67. For the development of the arsenal, see Mackenney 1987, pp.11-12; Cessi 1985, pp.15-18; Concina 1984; Gambier 1980, pp.57-58; Lane 1973, pp.44-55, 154-171, 336-389; Luzzatto 1961, pp.41-42, 65-68; Lane 1934.
[39] Concina 1984, pp.9-10; Brunello 1980-1981, p.67
[40] See Schulz 1991, p.431.
[41] Concina 1984, p.9.
[42] *Liber comunis* doc.551, p.133. Cited in Ibid, pp.10, 24 n.13. The arsenal workers were, however, able to hire themselves out to private employers. See Lane and Mueller 1985, p.252.
[43] Concina 1984, pp.9, 24 n.39.

twelfth-century inscription on the exterior of the apse wall of the church of San Giacomo, adjacent to the markets of Rialto:

> *Sit Crux tua vera salus huic, Christe, loco / Hoc circa templum sit jus mercantibus aequus, pondere nec vergat, nec sit convenctio prava.*[44]

The meaning of the directive can be elucidated from both its content and its position of prime visibility to those crossing the Grand Canal from the *Insula Sancti Marci*. At the Rialto, a place that was *templum* to both religion and to commerce, certain norms were expected of both traders and customers: obedience to government-set weights and measures, an appreciation of the binding nature of the *convenctio*, and rigorous fairness in practice and in observance, with loyalty a commodity expected both to Christ and government. It seems far from coincidental, in fact, that by this stage in the twelfth century, the Rialto markets were emphatically a communal concern. Individual economic gain was subsumed into the interests of the collective as a whole, and the inscription underlines that the adherence to state-set measures was a primary duty to both the spiritual order and the civic collective.

The ideology set out in the San Giacomo inscription reached full codification in 1173, when doge Sebastiano Ziani undersigned the annoniary law, a bull that was then proclaimed at the city's markets.[45] Intrinsically, the annoniary law set out a series of governmental rules and regulations within the frame of the collective good:

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[44] Agostonelli believes that the inscription was made at the time of the establishment of the markets in the ninth century, but Tigler's date of the twelfth century is probably a safer supposition. Agostinelli et al, 1995, pp.37, 39-40; Tigler, 1995, 1, p.287. For the inscription and the original civic nucleus at *Rivo Alto*, see also Muir 1996, p.85; Mueller 1997, pp.36-37 and fig.2 p.37.

[45] ASV, *Busta Ducale*, VI. See Monticolo 1892, pp.5-6; and pp.81-85 for the full text of the bull. Also CAV, I, pp.75-76 and n.4; Dandolo 1941, 1, col.299; Bonfiglio Dosio 1997, p.583; Cecchetti 1872, pp.216-217.

'*patriae nostre de bono in melius augere volentes.*'[46] Its remit impacted all the trades in fundamental food stuffs, including the baking and selling of bread and the commerce in wine, fish, poultry, meat, fruit, vegetables and oil. The requirement to use state-issue weights and measures, already a clearly-stated *consuetudine* in the San Giacomo inscription, was now fully inculcated into *lex*. The *pistori* (bakers), for example, were obliged to have the weight of their bread approved by their own governmentally-appointed *gastaldo* and *visdomini*; and this, in fact, relates to the discussion already undertaken above, for put simply these directives imply that they and the bread sellers were already inculcated within a guild structure.[47]

The annoniary law also stipulated state control in the area of prices. Traders had to observe government-set limits and were also forbidden to sell on goods to anyone who was not the final purchaser, with penalties for infraction vintners is representative: '*et neque timore vel fraude vitare debeat vinum recipere ad vendendum ab aliquo homine, furtum etiam nullum scienter supscipere debeat, nec faciat suscipi.*'[48] Here the defrauding of the consumer and disobedience to governmental norms are treated as one and the same, and the control of prices and quantities firmly equated the political and economic spheres for the good of the commune, '*publica nostra constitucione.*'

While the framing of strict control as a collective interest within the annoniary law set a remarkably durable template for centuries to come, the norms it encoded also demanded a means of enforcement. Accordingly, at the roughly the same time the bull was issued, Sebastiano Ziani also established a dedicated governmental agency

[46] Monticolo 1892, p.81.
[47] '*panem ad illam pesam facere et vendere debeat quam vicedominus aut gastaldio illi dederit.*' Ibid, p.82.
[48] Ibid.

for the supervision of trade: the *giustizia*.[49] In its early years, the remit of the *giustizia*'s patrician officials, the *justicarii* or *giustizieri*, closely mirrored that of the annoniary law itself. They were responsible for the issue and inspection of weights and measures, the implementation of price-capping and the detection and punishment of practices that defrauded customer or commune, with, as Monticolo suggests, a clear desire to control inflation by striking out any middleman between trader and consumer.[50]

By the early duecento, though, the role of the *giustizia* had been broadened to include all domestic manufacture and industry, and by 1261, in fact, its competencies were so extensive that it was split into two bodies: the *giustizia vecchia* for the trades relating to industry and manufacture (except glass, wool and silk, which had their own magistracies) and the *giustizia nuova* for those dealing in foodstuffs.[51] The *giustizia* was also supported by other related state agencies. The affairs of the butchers and the oil sellers, for example, were governed through the *provveditori alla biave* and the *ufficio della ternaria*, and the bakers via the *ufficiali al frumento*, which also organised the import of grain as a state enterprise.[52]

Arguably, though, this overall pattern of governmental regulation is most clearly reflected by the fact that by the early-thirteenth century, the key responsibility of the

[49] For an overview of the remit of the *giustizia*, see Mackenney 1987, pp.9-11; Gramigna and Perissa 1981, pp.25-26, 30; Bonfiglio Dosio 1997, p.585; Cherido 1980, pp.7-8; Chiapperino 1980, pp.15-16; Favaro 1975, p.16; Monticolo 1892, pp.11-12, 145.
[50] Monticolo 1892, p.6.
[51] For delineations of these spheres of responsibility, see Manno 1997, p.17; Mackenney 1987, pp.9-10; Chiapperino 1980, p.15. Tigler wrongly asserts that the *giustizia vecchia* only impacted 'le arti relative ai generi alimentari di primaria necessità', thus eliding its role in supervising those to do with industry and manufacture. Tigler 1995, 1, p.286.
[52] For the delineations of the various agencies, see Agostinelli et al 1995, p.50; Dal Borgo 1989, p.15, Monticolo 1892, p.8. The *ufficio della ternaria* is cited in the statutes of the terneri of 1263. See CAV II p.18; Manno 1997, p.17. For the *ufficio al frumento* and the related *camera del frumento*, which during this period developed into a financial institution which could fund communal coffers in times of need, as well as organising private loans and investments, see Mueller 1997, pp.135, 359-423; Mueller 1988, pp.321-360; Cessi 1985, p.14; Lane and Mueller 1985, pp.359-360; Lane 1971, p.265 n.33; Luzzatto 1961, pp.52-53.

giustizia and its related bodies had become the supervision of the guilds. The nature of the *arti*, in fact, rendered them the ideal means to structure and defend the economic interests of the civic collective, and they became the primary channel by which state control was devolved. In order to demonstrate the regulation within which the guilds were enclosed, it is useful to analyse a single set of statutes, and here the *capitolari* of the fishmongers (*pescivendoli*) – which also incorporated the related *colonelli* of the fishermen (*pescatori*) and the wholesale buyers (*compravendi*) – are particularly representative.[53]

The first clauses of the statutes, which probably date to their first redaction in 1227, outline the authority of *giustizia* and state. The preface states that the guildsmen and all their activities were under the jurisdiction of the *giustizieri* – '*nos iusticarii...super facto piscatorum et vendencium pisces*' – and the next clause specifies that infractions against the statutes as willed by doge, Great Council and *giustizia* were subject to fines, as well as that the *capitolari* were a governmental document that could be revised by the Great Council and *giustizia* at any time:

> *Hec omnia attendam et observabo, salvis omnibus preceptis atque ordinamentis que addere vel minuere voluerit dominus dux cum maiori parte sui consilii aut iusticiarii qui modo sunt vel erunt.*[54]

The following *capitolare* sets out the oath that each guildsman was obliged to swear in the presence of the *giustizieri* in order to practice his trade. It opens with the words '*Iuro ad evangelia sancta Dei*', thus neatly framing the concept of loyalty to

[53] See CAV I, p.59 n.2; also Gramigna and Perissa 1981, p.67; Cecchetti 1872, pp.221-223. For the term *colonelli*, see Manno 1997, p.17; also discussion in Chapter One.
[54] CAV I, p.60. A later clause of 1286-1288 specifies how such monies were to be divided: a third to the *giustizia*, another third to the supervisors (*sovrastanti*) of the arte, and the rest to infirm *confratelli* and the poor. Ibid, p.69. When fines were not paid, the right to trade was removed. For an example, see a ruling of 1288. Ibid, pp.71-72.

doge and commune also in terms of the spiritual collective.[55] The oath also incorporates directives closely following those codified by the annoniary law half a century before. Each member of the *arte*, for example, had to swear not to buy fish for resale, '*causa revendendi*'; and the *giustizia* clearly viewed the measure as crucial enough to expand in a clause dating to 1286 to 1288, which applies it explicitly to those *pescivendoli* who rented stalls from the commune: '*qui habet locum ad fictum in ulla pescaria*'.[56] Here, then, the implication is not only that the state itself was landlord in the marketplace, but that its interests crossed over into the protection of those of the consumer.

Subsequent clauses reinforce the omnipresence of the *giustizia* and government in guild life. Fish could not be sold without a state licence;[57] trade could only take place at the *pescarie* of San Marco and the Rialto, not at the homes of the *pescivendoli*, on pain of fines;[58] and those *pescivendoli* who sold at the Rialto could not trade at San Marco, and vice versa.[59] Other *capitolari* elaborate on the notion of consumer fraud. Blood could not be added into the fish tanks in order to make stock appear fresher;[60] fish heavier than a certain weight could not be sold without the express permission of the *giustizieri*;[61] the merchandise could not be gutted where its smell might offend – '*in alio loco que rendat puciam*' – with the governmentally-appointed guild supervisors, the *sovrastanti*, being obliged to denounce those who were caught doing so.[62] To make sure these and similar measures were being

[55] Monticolo 1892, p.15 and n.1; CAV I, p.65 n.3. For the oath in general, see Mackenney 1987, pp.25-26, 40 n.94; Bonfiglio Dosio 1997, p.579.
[56] 1286-1288. CAV I, pp.64-65.
[57] 1286-1288. CAV I, p.64.
[58] 1278-1288. Ibid, p.63.
[59] Both rules date to before 1278. Ibid, pp.61-62. Those traders who bought fish to sell both at San Marco and the Rialto were subject to fines. Ibid, pp.71-72 and p.71 n.7.
[60] 1278-1288. Ibid, p.63.
[61] 1286-1288. Ibid, p.66.
[62] c.1303. Ibid, pp.72-73. For the mode of reporting infringements, see Monticolo 1892, p.7. That such transgressions were taken seriously is illustrated by the case of the *arte* of the *vetrai* (glassblowers). In 1223 the Great Council decided to expel thirty of their number from their guild because they had broken their '*ordinamentum*.' Cracco 1967 p.67, n.1. For a

observed, the *piscariam Sancti Marci* had to be inspected every Friday and the Rialto *pescheria* every Saturday, a provision that was later expanded to obligatory daily checks.[63] The globality of state supervision, though, is arguably best illustrated by an *addizione* of 1321, by which the *pescivendoli* at Rialto and San Marco were ordered to take down their awnings at their stalls or *stazi*; they had been withholding quantities of fish to simulate scarcity, thus inflating the prices, the very thing governmental regulation was intended to avoid.[64]

While the statutes of the *pescivendoli* make it clear that the guildsmen had to adhere to a framework of strict state control implemented via the *giustizieri*, they also demonstrate that the concept of loyalty ran both ways. One addition of 1303 states that citizenship had been granted by the state to Domenico and Giacomino from the Giudecca fish sellers, '*de piscatoribus de Iudecha*,' who had already been in Venice for thirty-eight years, in acknowledgement of past and present loans to the commune, '*imprestita comuni*', thus demonstrating one way in which trade could fund state enterprise;[65] and another ruling of 1316 stipulates that the right to have a stall for selling fish at Rialto or San Marco could be granted in return for services to the commune, the nature of which is unfortunately not specified.[66]

Even more significantly, the *capitolari* also encoded a set of legal rights for their subjects. The guildsmen were entitled to appeal to their *sovrastanti* if they thought they were receiving unfair treatment, and the latter had to swear to judge any dispute that came before them in good faith, '*bona fide sine fraude*', neither hurting

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dilineation of the respective guild officials, including the *gastaldo* and the *sovrastanti* (also called *decani*), see Bonfiglio Dosio 1997, p.599.

[63] 1286-1288. CAV I, pp.65, 72-73. As Monticolo points out, the former clause was probably modelled on a disposition of 1265 in the statutes of the silk weavers. Ibid, p.27 n.3.

[64] 1321. MC, *Liber Phronesis*, c.77B; Avogaria, *Liber Neptunus*, c.159 B, c.160 A. CAV I pp.205-6. See also Gramigna and Perissa 1981, p.67.

[65] 24 August 1303. MC, *Liber Magnus*, c.53 B. CAV I, p.200. For the conferral of citizenship, see Molmenti 1981, p.72.

[66] 14 February 1316 (1315 *more veneto*). MC, *Liber Clincus*, c.30 B. CAV I, p.203.

enemies nor favouring friends, with fines being levied on any *arte* member who obstructed them in their duty.[67] Arguably the most important *capitolare* for the protection of the guildsmen's interests, however, reads as follows:

> *Ordinamus quod suprastantibus dicte artis debeant esse soliciti et intenti ad videre omnia utilia et necessaria hominibus dicte artis cum prode et honore domini ducis et comunis Veneciarum.*[68]

The ability to appeal framed within the clause is not merely a prerogative in itself; it also becomes the means to honour both doge and commune.[69]

Overall, the statutes of the *pescivendoli* allow us to draw clear conclusions about the state-guild dynamic. While the selling and marketing of fish allowed individual gain, it was a process firmly framed within the interests of the civic collective. Furthermore trade regulation was placed exclusively within the governmental sphere, with its enforcement being devolved to the *giustizieri* and the guild *sovrastanti*, whose role, in fact, was intended more to reflect state interests than those of the *arte* members themselves.[70] It is also important to underline that the case of the fishmongers is representative of the corpus of thirteenth-century statutes as a whole. While the details of the rules vary for each guild according to its specific activities, all the *capitolari* set out a similar balance of restrictive regulation and legal redress, with the unilateral nature of the role of the *giustizieri* stressed throughout. Similarly, this recurring pattern is framed and endorsed by the emphasis placed on the oath of loyalty to doge, state and the civic collective. How, then, does this image of governmental control translate as a political model?

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[67] 1286-1288. Ibid, pp.66-68.
[68] 1286-88. Ibid, p.70.
[69] For an outline of the workings of the tribunals of the *arti*, see Monticolo 1891, pp.176-177.
[70] See Bonfiglio Dosio 1997, p.599.

Arti and State: Interpretations

The level of centralised state control that appears to have been applied to Venice's guilds in itself raises issues and questions. Historians have debated, for example, whether it equated into stultifying constriction for the city's artisans and traders or whether, in fact, it was a paradigm of fair representation. It is the latter view, of course, that made its way into Venice's own historiographical tradition to become part of the Myth; and in some ways, this notion of the guild system equating into civic presence for the city's artisan workers has endured because there is little sense of the regulation it encoded having been resisted.

Here, we enter into a discussion of how the case of Venice contrasts to the troubles caused by the attempted rise of the artisan class in other city communes. Historians such as Favaro, for example, have contrasted its lack of political turmoil to violent uprisings elsewhere, with obvious points of comparison being events in Florence and Bologna at the end of the thirteenth century, and, further afield, the revolt of the "Blue Nail" cloth-workers of Flanders in 1280, during which church-owned granaries were violently looted.[71] Yet if the legal rights placed within the guild statutes were certainly unparalled elsewhere, this does not explain why such dramatic incidents apparently did not occur in Venice itself. Did firm governmental control effectively block the guilds' political intentions from becoming anything more than aspirational?

Indeed some historians have read the situation of the medieval guilds in starkly opposing terms to that of a content artisan class ruled by a benign merchant

[71] For a comparative discussion of the revolts in Bologna and Florence, see Favaro 1975, p.10; Mackenney 1987, p.2; Muir 1981, p.43 and n.78; Chiapperino 1980, p.15; Monticolo 1892, pp.155-6. For the "Blue Nails," see Duby 1981, p.169.

oligarchy. Cracco, for example, frames the workers' lot as being the product of a stringent policy of 'vigilanza e repressione,' and the thirteenth-century regulatory framework to have been underwritten by 'la paura di una sovversione violenta dello status quo.'[72] Since Cracco cites the 'Trade Reliefs' as evidence for his reading, it is worth examining his arguments for this 'Anti-Myth' in some detail.

Essentially, as we saw in Chapter One, Cracco takes the notion of direct guild patronage at San Marco as a given. Let us briefly restate the case. He suggests that the *arti* could only have commissioned the sculptures at a time when they had sufficient 'peso effettivo nella società veneziana' to 'violare l'esclusivismo dei mercanti nel loro stesso tempio votivo,' and that this historical moment can be pinpointed to the years immediately after Lorenzo Tiepolo's ascension to the dogado.[73] Here Cracco's argument centres on the particularly high number of statutes registered in this period: thirteen sets in the years 1270 to 1271 alone, including those of eight of the *arti* of the 'Trade Reliefs.'[74] He proposes that the intensity of the issue of statutes reflects a situation in which the guilds were finally able to push for the representation of their own interests after years in which they had been repressed in favour of those of the merchant oligarchy.[75]

Cracco also outlined the lineaments of this political trajectory, and since it raises some critical points and issues it is worth examining in detail. First of all, he considers the process of constriction of artisan interests to have started in the late-twelfth century under doge Sebastiano Ziani, a member of the *grandi* or the old merchant aristocracy. With the annoniary law and the establishment of the *giustizia*,

[72] Cracco 1967 pp.41, 81.
[73] Ibid, p.249.
[74] The *barbieri* (December 1270), the *calzolai* (November 1271), the *falegnami* (November 1271), the *carpentieri* (November 1271), the *calafati* (November 1271), the *muratori* (November 1271), the *fabbri* (December 1271) and the *bottai* (December 1271). See discussion above and also Chapter One.
[75] Cracco 1967, p.67 n.1.

Ziani centralised governmental control of the worker class, the *parvi*, and also limited their political participation by reducing the function of the popular assembly or *arengo* to a purely symbolic level.[76] The approach was developed under Ziani's son Pietro, who in 1207 introduced an electoral reform to harness the new merchant class of the *popolari* or *nuovi* to the political aims of the *grandi*.[77] In contrast, Cracco argues that Pietro Ziani's successor, Giacomo Tiepolo - a patrician of *popolare* extraction – operated a policy of much wider political inclusion. Focusing as it did on controlling the movement of real estate, Tiepolo's revision of the *statuti civili* in 1242 bound the aspirations of the new class of the 'piccoli proprietari' to increased levels of wealth, and this in lines with his move to embrace the political possibilities presented by expansion in the *terraferma*.[78]

Tiepolo's approach, however, was viewed with suspicion by the *grandi*; put simply, there was a risk that the civic mores his statutes encoded might lead to some advancement, although heavily restricted, of the artisan class itself.[79] For Cracco, it is not insignificant that Tiepolo was forced to resign in 1249, bringing this balancing strategy to an abrupt end.[80] In his *promissione* – the oath that each doge had to swear when coming into office – Tiepolo's successor Marino Morosini had to uphold provisions that explicitly forbade the calling of the *arengo* and the exercising of any political decisions not approved by the Great Council, thus ensuring that the power balance was tipped firmly in favour of mercantile interests.[81]

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[76] Ibid, pp.41, 49. For the progressive reduction of the role of the *arengo*, which was finally abolished in 1423, see Lane 1971, pp.257, 273 n.89; Molmenti 1981, p.63; Da Mosto 1937, p.16.
[77] Cracco 1967, pp.59-60,70.
[78] Ibid, pp.128-132. For the civic statutes of 1242, see Besta and Predelli 1901; Cessi 1938. For contemporary attitudes towards expansion in the *terraferma*, see Lazzarini 1919, pp.5-31.
[79] Ibid, p.119. In 1237, for instance, Tiepolo forced through a measure that demanded the approval of the populace for all sales in commercial property. Ibid, pp.160, 171.
[80] Ibid, p.175.
[81] Cracco, pp.176, 179, 180-184.

Above all, Cracco underlines the net change in economic policy ushered in by the administrations of Marino Morosini and his successor Ranier Zeno, *grandi* through and through. Both doges strongly favoured large-scale overseas commerce over the consolidation of the domestic economy, choosing not to tax imports heavily but instead to expand the existing system of forced loans and to increase the fiscal load on foodstuffs, including, in 1263, that on wine, and in 1264 that on the grinding of wheat.[82] Furthermore, Zeno's own contribution to civic law, the 1255 corpus of maritime statutes – the *statuta navium* – was strongly motivated by the protection of *colleganze* and thus the consolidation of mercantile interests.[83]

Then, apparently, there was a sea change – or at least an attempted shift in emphasis. Cracco, in fact, suggests that Ranier Zeno's successor Lorenzo Tiepolo appears to have represented a new age for Venice's guildsmen, or was perceived as such in their eyes. Certainly the description of the guild procession offered by Martino Da Canal attests to their considerable joy at his election; and the *grandi* may have feared that Tiepolo might extend his father's policy of furthering the *nuovi* to the non-patrician class.[84] Yet Tiepolo's untimely death, coupled with the fierce opposition to his policies from the *grandi* during his reign, effectively thwarted any aspirations to political clout amongst the working population. On his election in 1275, his successor Giacomo Contarini – very much the candidate of the *grandi* - had a new obligation inserted into his *promissione*: to not associate with the guilds in any shape or form. The process of restriction started under Sebastiano Ziani a century or so before could now continue to develop, with its finale being the

[82] Ibid, pp.198, 200-201, 229 and discussion below. For forced loans, see especially Luzzatto 1954 , pp.212-224; Cecchetti 1884, pp.32-33. For thirteenth-century examples, see Cessi 1931, II, pp.143, 239, 241, 259, 287, 375, 389. For Marino Morosini, see also Cessi 1985, pp.158-170; for Ranier Zeno, Ibid, pp.171-236.
[83] Cracco 1967, pp.196-197. For the *statuta navium*, see also Lane 1971, p.243; Lane 1987, pp.408-411, 419; Predelli and Sacerdoti 1902.
[84] Da Canal 1972, pp.282-288.

serrata of 1297, when political participation was finally crystallised as being the sole prerogative of an all-powerful mercantile government.[85]

Cracco's argument is undoubtedly powerful, for the defining power struggle of the thirteenth century appears not have been between patricians and the worker class. Instead the real source of tension was the shifting struggle between *grandi* and *popolari*, with the artisans being harnessed or distanced by both factions according to the requirements of a particular political moment.[86] In other respects, however, Cracco's rationale is founded on faulty ground. First, his use of the 'Trade Reliefs' as primary evidence is deeply problematic. As we saw in Chapter Two, the stylistic and material criteria indicate that the sculptures were executed well *before* the early 1270s; probably, in fact, within the dogado of Ranier Zeno, whom Cracco frames as an opponent of any kind of popular participation in the political process. In this sense at least, Tigler's opinion that Cracco is guilty of applying a predeterministic contextual reading to the 'Trade Reliefs' is all too credible.[87]

The second fault line in Cracco's theory is purely historical. Crucially, he argues that the most convincing evidence for Lorenzo Tiepolo's tolerant approach lies in the high concentration of *capitolari* issued in 1270 and 1271, and that the process of granting of statutes was promoted by the guilds themselves in a move to counter their comparative oppression under the doge's predecessors.[88] Here, though, Cracco's premises are once more rather tenuous. Firstly, as we saw in the case of the *pescivendoli*, the wording of the statutes makes it clear they were by definition

[85] For the serrata see Cracco 1967, p.119, 347-348; for the rise and fall of Lorenzo Tiepolo and the succession of Giacomo Contarini, Ibid, pp.235-298; and for the overall notion of the tensions between *grandi* versus *popolari*, Ibid, pp.49-50, 83-90, 132-133, 231-234.
[86] Cracco 1980, p.97.
[87] For this point, see also Romano 1987, p.8.
[88] Tigler 1995, 1, p.258 n.12. See also discussion in Chapter One.
[89] Cracco 1967, pp.219-225, 259. Cracco's stance closely echoes one originally set out by Monticolo. Monticolo 1892, p.24.

governmental documents; the emphasis is firmly on state control devolved by means of the *giustizia* and other government agencies. Secondly, Cracco's argument is predicated on the assumption that the existence of an *arte* depended on its possession of statutes, which as we saw in Chapter One is far from being the case: formalised guilds are documented much earlier, and *capitolari* were simply issued by the state so that it could better enforce its own regulatory framework.[89]

In the event, Cracco's line of thinking is too polarised to be truly useful to the discussion of Venice's medieval guilds. If, as he asserts, the regulation of the guilds was intended to reinforce patrician mercantile interests, how can this be set against the idea of the former having sufficient autonomy to commission their own images at San Marco itself? Ironically, it is only when we reverse the logic within Cracco's theory that its usefulness becomes apparent. The intense activity of the *giustizieri* in the first years of Lorenzo Tiepolo's reign could be viewed as a deliberate counter-balancing of policies which his own government perceived as destabilising; and the removal of the doge-guild dynamic in the *promissio* of Giacomo Contarini could represent the continuation of a policy to reverse the changes Tiepolo had attempted to effect within the civic framework, not its *ad novo* implementation. In short, it is probably problematic to confuse the final success of the regulation to which the guilds were subject with its underlying motivation.

The Enforcement of the Political Balance: The Oath of Loyalty

The implicit construct of the *arti* statutes issued from 1219 to the later 1250s, then, appears to have been the preservation of the interests of the *Comune veneciarum*, and overall governmental regulation may not have been a means of oppression but simply, as Gramigna and Perissa put it, 'un valido mezzo di controllo dello stato su

[89] See also discussion in Chapter One.

artigiani e cittadini.'[90] Yet in one crucial respect, Cracco's reading is of immense value, for the dogado of Ranier Zeno and the early years of Lorenzo Tiepolo's do appear to have constituted the crucial period during which this paradigm of state control was vigorously defended. Like Cracco, in fact, Professors Mackenney and Lane argue that these years constituted a real political crisis: the status quo was perceived to be at severe risk, and as such the statute-issuing process itself may have been anything but a serene trajectory. Here, though, the chief evidence lies not so much in the rules the statutes encoded but by the means by which the obedience of the guildsmen was enforced: the oath of loyalty.

The concept of the oath was a fundamental construct of Venice's constitution. It was an integral part, for instance, of the doge's *promissione*, and in lower rank officialdom, swearing loyalty to the civic framework, as well as to the obligation to uphold public office if required, was probably framed formally for the first time in 1228 as the *iuramentum obedientie*.[91] It is arguably in the guild *capitolari*, though, that its importance is thrown into most dramatic relief.

As we saw in the statutes of the *pescivendoli* of 1227, at first the oath was framed around the upholding of governmentally approved norms in tools, materials, weights and measures, prices and food quality, matters that can be broadly defined as the avoiding of defrauding the consumer. Yet even in the earliest statutes, the wording of the oath frames fraud within a notion that has inherently more politicised undertones, that of conspiracy. In the *capitolari* of the tailors (*sarti*), issued in 1219, it states:

[90] Gramigna and Perissa 1981, p.28.
[91] Cessi 1985, pp.7-8. For the *promissio*, see Graziato 1986; Norwich 1977 pp.175, 206.

Nullum ordinamentum vel conpagniam fatiam nec fieri fatiam tam de precio custure draporum, nec eciam propter aliquam causam fatiam nec fieri fatiam rassam supra aliquibus personis de conparando drappo.[92]

Here, then, the idea of conspiracy is applied to the formation of any grouping that might impact fair trade, and this characterisation is maintained in certain of the subsequent statutes, notably those of the doublet makers (*giubbettieri*, 1219), the dyers (*tintori*, 1243) and the doctors (*medici*, 1258).[93]

In other *capitolari*, however, the idea of consumer fraud is framed as an action against the interests of the civic collective. In the oath of the fustian sellers (*filacanapi*, 1233), for instance, the guildsmen had to swear not to organise any grouping amongst themselves that might constitute a 'conspiracy' against the inhabitants of the city: '*...non faciam ullam conpagniam nec conspirationem cum aliquo contra homines Veneciarum de precio vendicionis cannabi seu tegle*';[94] the oath of the goldsmiths (*orefici*, 1233) actively required that any nefarious practice should be reported to the *giustizieri*;[95] and the oath of the oil sellers (*ternieri*, 1263) specifies that any such illicit practice might damage the interests of other related professions, in this case the butchers (*becheri*).[96]

It is in the statutes of the 1260s, though, that the idea of conspiracy takes on a more deeply politicised tone. In the *capitolari* of the sawyers (*segadori*, 1262), for instance, it is presented as an overt act against the commune itself: '*Nullumque*

[92] CAV I, pp.12-13.
[93] The oath of the *giubettieri*, for instance, reads as follows: '*Item, nullam conpagnia vel raxam vel conspiuracio contra aliquem non faciam ut sit deramentum contra aliquem.* Ibid, p.25. For the *tintori*, Ibid, p.141; for the *medici*, Ibid, p.147.
[94] CAV I, p.98.
[95] Ibid, pp.119-120.
[96] CAV II, p.18. See also the redaction of their statutes in 1278, in which the disposition is repeated. CAV III, p.14. One wonders whether this may have arisen from pre-existing tensions, although the documentation of course does not make such a reading explicit.

ordinamentum faciam in hac arte contra Comune et homines Veneciarum; et si factum fuerit, de cetero non tenebo nec observabo.'[97] Indeed it may not be coincidental that this new regulation was applied to an *arte* whose activities were intimately linked with the arsenal, the key repository of state power. When we bear in mind that at this time tensions with Genoa were acute and that Constantinople had fallen to the Paleologans a year previously – thus rendering Venice's possessions in the east all too precarious – it is not surprising that the oath now framed the maintenance of collective interests as absolute necessity.

A few years later, it becomes even more clear that the state regarded the preservation of the status quo as a matter of utmost urgency. While the issue of *capitolari* paused after those of the silk weavers (*setaroli*) of 1265, it then accelerated dramatically in 1270 and 1271; as we have already mentioned, thirteen sets were encoded in these years alone. The most striking feature of these new *capitolari* is that four clauses are added to the oath, the wording of which varies very little from guild to guild.[98] In the statutes of the shipwrights (*marangoni da nave*), issued in November 1271, they run as follows:

> *Item, ordinamus quod gastaldio dicte artis mutari debeat quolibet anno; et ille qui est, permanere debeat usque complementum sui anni.*[99]

> *Item, quod gastaldio huius artis teneatur in capite sui anni accipere illud capitulare quod ei dederint isuticiarii; et dictus gastaldio non possit nec debeat facere aliquod ordinamentum inter se, nisi cum voluntate*

[97] CAV II, p.4.
[98] For the minor variations in the wording of the oath clauses, see Mackenney 1987, p.25; Mackenney 1997, p.27; Monticolo 1892, p.145.
[99] CAV II, p.208.

dominorum iusticiariorum; et si quis contra fecerit, ammittat gastaldiam et libras denariorum .xxx.et soldos .xii.[100]

Item, ordinamus quod nec gastaldio nec aliquis alius huius artis audeat facere aliquam convocationem de hominibus huius artis nisi bis in anno sine licencia dominorum iusticiariorum, in pena banni integri.[101]

Item, ordinamus quod alquis de predicta arte non audeat nec pressummat facere aliquod ordinamentum vel compagniam seu comilitatem vel conspirationem per iuramentum vel fidanciam aut per aliquam aliam promissionem contra honorem domini ducis et consilii ac comunis Veneciarum seu contra aliquam aliam personam, im pena banni integri; et quilibet de dicta arte iuramento teneatur eum vel eos qui in suprascripto facto inventus fuerit, accussare cicius quam poterit domino duci er eius cosilio aut dominis iusticariis.[102]

By themselves, the first three of these ordinances would not appear overly proscriptive. The first merely restricts the length of time any guild *gastaldo* could hold office to one year; the second stipulates the upholding the statutes as directed by the *giustizia*; and the third sets out the necessity to read the *capitolari* aloud at meetings, which in themselves could not be convened unless authorised by the state. Yet it is the fourth clause - the lengthy prohibition of any sort of conspiracy - that casts the grouping into more significant light. With no *gastaldo* in office for more than a year, such nefarious activities were more difficult to organise, and the upholding of the statutes, as well as the obligation to read them aloud, would have constantly reiterated their binding nature. When taken with the rulings as whole,

[100] Cap.30. Ibid, p.209.
[101] Cap.32. Ibid.
[102] Cap.31. Ibid.

even the varied nomenclature applied to conspiracy - *compagniam, comilitatem, conspirationem* – appears to be cover all bases. As Mackenney states, in one fell swoop 'the oath to abide by guild regulations had become an oath of allegiance to the state.'[103]

It is the timing of the additions, however, that is arguably most revealing. While the four clauses were inserted into the statutes of 1270-1271, all appear to have been based on rulings made in the Great Council in the October 1264 and each is dated November 30th 1265, presumably the time of their final approval. What is striking, though, is that in the *capitolari* issued after 1271, the revised oath disappears. The conclusion is thus inescapable that in the period 1265 to 1271, as Lane puts it, 'subversion of some kind was afoot, or at least feared.'[104]

For both Lane and Mackenney, in fact, the situation may be ascribable to events that took place in 1264.[105] In that year, doge Ranier Zeno ordered a punitive tax on the grinding of wheat, a move that would have hit the population as a whole particularly hard, and for one of the first and only times in Venetian history, violence exploded. While the events are given a brief mention in several histories of Venice, including the fourteenth-century *Chronica per extensum descripta* of doge Andrea Dandolo, the fullest and most vivid description is offered by a seventeenth-century manuscript in the Correr Library, the *Discordie Civili, Tradimenti, Rivoluzioni e Congiure*.[106] Because this source, to my knowledge, remains unpublished, it is worth reproducing the relevant passage in full:

[103] Mackenney 1987, p.25.
[104] Lane 1973, p.106.
[105] Ibid, pp.106-107; Mackenney 1987, p.26.
[106] BC, Zoppetti P.D.178 b., p.19. I have placed the illegible words within the hand-written narrative in square brackets. See also Dandolo 1941, 1, p.314.

....nel quel tempo li Genovesi faceva una Crudel Guerra alla Repubblica per la qual cosa il Doge e la Signoria furon necessitati a meter molte [Sanze] e Graveze al poppolo e [Dumanda] [havendo] Imprestidi; erra in all'hora il poppolo molto contrario alla Nobilità si era Avanzata nel Governo e haveva quasi Escluso il poppolo da gli honori della Patria e Massime perche haveva no [molto] ristretta fra loro la ellezion del Doge e havevano Rifformate il Consegno sotto il Doge Sebastian Ziani per la qual Cosa trovarono à propposito l'occasione di valersene contro la Nobilità; è con questo cominciò il poppolo lamentarsi ch' li Nobili si Radunavano a Danno ai Poveri e che il Soldo non lo spendavano per Utile della Patria ma andavano nelli [Serigni] d'alcuni pochi li quali Tirranegiavano a Terra e che le Case d' Ricchi si andavano giornalmente facendo più Ricchi e potenti con il Sangue de Popoli Veneti e li lassiavano mendichi e che sempre più li mandavano di malle, in peggio è che si erano dimentichato che erano que Poppoli li quali ebero tante Vittorie d' loro Nemici, sagrificando il Sangue e la Vitta per l'esaltazion della Sua Patria tanto che queste e Simili Impertinenze diede un gran urto alla Plebe e Occorse appunto in quel Tempo far Publichar una certa parte di Gravezza e alcuni Seddiciosi persuarsero il Poppolo a Sollevarsi di modo che si mosse con tante impeto che tiro dalla Piera del Bando il Comandador e maltratando alcuni Officiali che erano presenti. La qual Rovina Sentendola il Doge M.Renier Zen [viense] subito da basso in Compagnia d'alcuni Senatori per voler quietar il Poppolo ma all'hora più Infuriato che mai dicendoli gran villannie al Doge e alli Senatori chiamamdoli Ebreij e Tirranni Vittuperando tutta la Nobilità Dando di man alli Sassi e cominciò talmente a Tempestare, che il Doge e la Sua Compagnia ebbero di gracia di rittornar in Palazo, facendolo anco Serrar se hanno molesto esser sicurri da questa Furia Poppolare Sollevata. In fatto in quel giorno

furono fatto d'gran Malli havendo sacchegiato molte Case e molte altre abbrugiate e privando di vitta molti che havevano [Livore] e un Plebeo il qual si chiamava Beneto Canalo haveva Ricevuto alcune Ingiurie da [M.] Piero Contarini a SS.Apostoli e portandosi con molti altri ala sua Casa alla quale gli diede Fuoco Abrugiandola Insieme con molte altre Case di quelli che non havevano Colpa e il Contarini ebbe la buona Sorte a [non vi] esser: essendo successo altri Infiniti mali che furono Comessi. Ma il Doge come Padre Prudente lasciò sfogar l'Imperto di questo Poppolo Infuriato e poi quando fu cessato la Furia fecevo dare le Marzj adosso alli Cappi della Sollevazione e gli Diedero Conveniente Castigo; perche il Poppolo dopo quel primo giorno si dippartirono e andarono a tender a Fatti loro e benche restasse una grossa Compagnia co loro Cappi niente di mezzo non pottè ressistere alla Forza del Doge. Havendossi fatti Forti in una Casa à s.Marzilian ma riddotti in pochi gli convenne lasciarlij prender se benne co Morte d'qualched'uno e questo furono [Cazzeliari] Candian il quale confessò di haver hauto pensiero di Strano di esser fatto Doge a voce del Poppolo e questo erano con li seguenti Compagni: Beneto Chavalo, Nicolò Soco, Giovanni Maria di Francesco, Nicolo dei Curri, Antonio Grande et altri simo al 12 di 14 li quali parte sonno statti strangolati e altri impiccati e il Resto Sonno Stati Annegati e altri 30 di costoro furono condanati in Prigione per qualche Tempo e parte in Gallera e del Rimanente non se ne parlorono e così si quietò il gran Rumore per la Prudenza del Doge.

In a register of capital punishments at the end of the manuscript Doge Zeno's evident decision to rescind on his promise of amnesty is given a suitably stark end

note. By the date 1264 it is simply noted: '*Gio Candian con altri 3 Compagni furono impicati in Piaza di S.Marco come Cappi di Sollevazion.*'[107]

The account in the *Discordie*, then, frames the events of 1264 as the tipping-point of a progressive swelling of social tensions; and here the historical context more than supports such a reading. Firstly, the tax on the grinding of wheat was probably just the latest of a long series of punitive fiscal measures. As Cracco points out, the war with Genoa and the campaign against Ezzelino da Romano would have placed a considerable burden on the commune's finances;[108] and in the period between the Paleologan retaking of Constantinople in 1261 and the treaty of 1268, political insecurity might well have translated into the increasing of economic pressure on an already over-stretched population.[109] Secondly, as Luzzatto, Mueller and Ortalli have demonstrated, it was precisely in the lead-up to the 1260s that the system of forced loans to gather funds for state coffers was gathering momentum, as was the obligated purchase of government bonds.[110] But whether these had much impact on the artisans and petty traders is a moot point. Both loans and bonds were calculated according to real estate worth, and thus the most considerable financial weight would have fallen on the shoulders of only the more solvent.

Even with this reservation in mind, though, some speculative conclusions can be drawn. As we saw above, the period of Giacomo Tiepolo's dogado had increased pre-existing tensions within the merchant oligarchy; and the fact that Tiepolo's

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[107] BC, Zoppetti P.D. 178 b., p.342.
[108] Cracco 1967, pp.216-219, 231-234.
[109] For the treaty of 1268, see Chapter Two; also Ortalli 1998-1999, pp.414-415; Cessi 1985, pp.232, 239; Pincus 1984, pp.48, 55 n.55. Concina, on the other hand, frames such 'tensioni sociali' as the result of the surge of heretical belief in Venice's lower classes. Concina 1984, p.21. While this could be a fruitful vein of inquiry, I believe that the cause was above all economic.
[110] According to Ortalli, the system of forced loans may have been established to fund the campaign against Zadar in 1187. They are only securely documented, however, from 1207; and initially at least they were exerted on a voluntary basis. See Ortalli 1998-1999, pp.420-421; Mueller 1998, p.323; Luzzatto 1961, pp.28-29, 32-34, 73-75.

policies regarding civic inclusion were ultimately discarded by his successors Marino Morosini and Ranier Zeno, both archetypal *grandi*, may have led to the protracted development of an atmosphere of disillusionment amongst the city's artisan workers and the eventual provocation of a political crisis. In these terms, it is interesting that the account in the *Discordie* cites Sebastiano Ziani's reform of the dogal electoral system in 1173 and 1174 as a type of proto-*serrata*. Not only did the constitutional revisions lead to the formation of the Great Council; doge Ziani also used them to reduce the traditional role of the popular assembly, the *arengo* or *concio*, in approving any crucial governmental decision, including the declaration of war or the choice of a new doge.[111]

In the course of the thirteenth century, in fact, the effective role of the ordinary citizenry in political processes was even more dramatically eroded. By the time of Giacomo Tiepolo's election, the Great Council was the only organ responsible for the election of the new doge, with their choice being presented to the population as a *fait accompli*.[112] In itself it is revealing that in the aftermath of Ranier Zeno's death, Lorenzo Tiepolo's political opponents, spearheaded by the Dandolo family, attempted to block his election precisely by limiting the vote to the Great Council within the basilica, rather than using the traditional means of an *arengo* in the Piazza.[113] Could the sentiment that its already limited political role was being systematically removed have led the working populace to a violent expression of dissatisfaction?

In the event, the account in the *Discordie* is probably pitched with the rather dubious benefit of hindsight. In the seventeenth century, it might have appeared

[111] For the establishment and history of the *arengo* or *concio*, which was originally held in the *curte Palacii* and then moved to San Marco by the twelfth century, see Luzzatto 1961, p.8; Apollonio 1888, p.52.
[112] See Molmenti 1981, pp.62-63; Norwich 1977, p.133.
[113] Cracco 1967, pp.198, 235-259.

more politic to frame popular dissent in terms of a few disgruntled *parvi*; but in reality the riot appears to have been engineered primarily by patrician factions. Andrea Dandolo's *Chronica*, for example, states that it was sparked off by a clash between partisans of the Dandolo and the Tiepolo in the Piazza San Marco, a fight during which Giovanni Dandolo injured the future doge Lorenzo Tiepolo.[114] That the general population was caught up in the violence, however, is evidenced by a law passed shortly afterwards banning any commoner from displaying the arms of the patrician faction to which they adhered.[115] Yet while this suggests that the revolt itself may have been sparked by rivalries between merchant oligarchs, there is little doubt that their actions harnessed pre-existing popular tensions.[116] Certainly, the fact that the Great Council voted in the new anti-conspiracy measures in the immediate aftermath of the riot demonstrates that they were intended as a direct means to diffuse the 'stato di pericolo esplosivo che veniva dal basso.'[117]

The events of 1264 and the subsequent insertion of the four anti-conspiracy clauses in the oath, then, should be premised not so much on their causes as on their effects. The control of the *arti* was constructed on a firm basis of regulation within the overall notion of the civic collective, and it was the preservation of this status quo that informed governmental policy-making from the outset. That the riot led to more extreme measures, however, is absolutely indubitable. Above and beyond the

[114] Dandolo 1941, I, p.314.
[115] For this law, reported by Andrea Dandolo's *Chronica,* see Lane 1973, p.107; for the idea of patricians harnessing internal strife, see also Molmenti 1981, p.64; Lane 1971, pp.243, 265 n.30.
[116] This is very much the reading usually applied to a more famous rebellion: the Querini-Tiepolo conspiracy of 1310, which directly led to the formation of the Council of Ten. See Molmenti 1981, p.68; Muir 1981, pp.217-218; Norwich 1977, p.212; Pullan 1971, p.24.
[117] Cracco 1967, p.262. Cracco rather invalidates his own argument by proposing that the revisions to the oath were not inserted in 1270 and 1271 but instead when the corpus of statutes was revised in 1278. Cracco 1967 p.264. This reading, however, fails to take into account one salient fact: that some statutes, undated but, according to Monticolo, products of the period 1271 to 1278, do not contain the additions to the oath: those of the *panni vecchi* (second-hand cloth sellers), the *conciatori di pelli e corami* (tanners) and the *fustagnai* (canvas, fustian and linen weavers). If the oath revisions were only inserted in 1278, why do they not appear in these *capitolari* also?

wording of the additions themselves, the dynamics of the process of encoding the statutes in 1270 and 1271 shows that the state regarded the hammering home of the collective ideal as a key construct in dismantling potential dissent at source. In these terms, the registration of a quarter of the thirteenth-century corpus of *capitolari* in the years 1270 and 1271 alone was symptomatic of a move to enforce regulation, not to relax it.

At the same time, though, it is not unreasonable to suppose that Lorenzo Tiepolo's election did indeed lead the artisans and small-scale traders to believe that the dark years had been superseded by the possibility of their becoming, as Mackenney puts it, 'a real political force.'[118] It must be underlined, though, that any such hopes and aspirations remained essentially unrealised. First of all, Lorenzo Tiepolo was unable to see his promised *laissez-faire* approach through, and this because his own government worked in firm opposition. In 1271 a deliberation in the Great Council forbade any official from the police force, the *signori di notte* – a body under the direct jurisdiction of the doge – being drawn from an *arte*;[119] another from the same year negated any sort of complicity within the *giustizia* itself by ruling that scribes had to be elected afresh every year and that no gifts or free meals could be offered to any serving officials;[120] and in 1274 the Great Council reinforced the provisions within the guild oath by deeming that any illicit grouping within the working population was declared to be punishable by banishment.[121] Arguably most revealing consideration, though, is the fact that in November 1271, Tiepolo had moved for the restoration of the former dogal prerogative of calling the *arengo*. In itself, it speaks volumes that the Great Council rejected the notion apparently only

[118] Mackenney 1997, p.28.
[119] Cracco 1967, p.260. See also Cessi 1931, II, p.33. For the *signori di notte*, see Lane and Mueller 1985, pp.151-152. For their regulation and their *capitolari*, which include deliberations from 1232 onwards, see ASV, *Signori di notte al civil/criminal*, regs.1a-5; ASV, *Miscellanea*, cod.133.
[120] *Liber Comunis secundus*, c.103 B. Cited in Monticolo 1892, p.13 and n.1.
[121] Cracco 1967, p.262; Cessi 1931, II, p.94.

days before the process of issuing the new guild statutes, complete with their lengthy oath, reached its peak.[122]

In these terms, the intensive issue of statutes in 1270 and 1271 is persuasive for the case of a far from serene guild-state dynamic; and as Mackenney points out, it is probably significant that one of the three *giustizieri* in office at the time was Marco Badoer, 'a fierce opponent of popular political participation.'[123] A possible conclusion is that Badoer was deliberately brought in to tackle potential insurgency within the guilds, and certainly he was an ideal tool by which those opposed to Tiepolo could implement the crushing reforms implied by the additions to the oath. He was firmly a *grande*, being a wealthy businessman in his own right; he had led the campaign against Ezzelino da Romano, and having himself aspired to the dogado, was a fierce rival of Lorenzo Tiepolo, after whose death he was finally elected to the Great Council.[124] Badoer's presence as one of signatories of the *capitolari*, in fact, perfectly sums up the strained paradox between Tiepolo's symbolic olive branch to the guilds and the true restriction of their situation.[125] As Ortalli puts it, if the aim was to present 'un'immagine di serena continuità, singolarmente priva di tensioni', it was an impression that in essence was 'del tutto falso.'[126]

[122] For the doge and the *arengo*, see Fasoli 1973, p.285. For the deliberation of 1271, Cracco 1967, p.262.
[123] Mackenney 1997, p.29. See also Mackenney 1981, pp.130-131.
[124] For Badoer's wealth, the extent of which is illustrated by the provisions of his 1284 will, see Pozza 1982, pp.55, 59. For his military role and also his incumbency as *podestà* of Padua and Treviso, see Dandolo 1941, pp.319-21; Cessi 1985 pp.176, 179; Pozza 1982, pp.54-55; Bastinelli 1963, pp.123-124. For his political aspirations and post-Tiepolo career, see Pozza 1982, pp.56, 58-59.
[125] Pozza takes a contrasting stance to Mackenney, stating that Badoer's political career in the early 1270s was largely undistinguished. This reading, however, is based on the quite erroneous supposition that as a governmental body, the *giustizia* was relatively unimportant. See Pozza 1982, p.58 and n.84 p.91.
[126] Ortalli 1998-1999, p.414.

The challenge within this reading, however, is to determine whether or not the guilds were content within this effective state of compromise. In some senses, the undertaking is objectively impossible, for the sources, especially their statutes, by definition give little indication of any recourses to their right of appeal, let alone to articulated feelings of dissatisfaction. It could be countered, though, that Lorenzo Tiepolo's dogado did not fail the *arti* completely. His undertaking to them, as Lane suggests, may have lay in him having 'made it clear that the laws passed during the latter years of his predecessor [Ranier Zeno] would not be used to destroy their organisations.'[127] Despite the anti-conspiracy measures they contained, the *capitolari* still functioned as the guarantee of a fair legal balance; they did not engender oppression, but instead further consolidated a framework within which subversion was all but impossible. In short, the status of the guilds may not have been one of executive action, but a relative amount of freedom was ensured, if only within the circumscription of the ideal of maintaining an aristocratic hold on government.[128]

The sequel to Tiepolo's reign reinforces these speculative conclusions. After his untimely death and the election of the candidate of the *grandi*, Giacomo Contarini, the reinforced patrician hold on the regulatory framework does appear to have fully crystallised: a new clause inserted into Contarini's *promissione*, for instance, specifically forbade the doge to call the guilds to arms without the permission of the Great Council. This, though, as Lane argues, was probably more in lines with the fear that such a capability would give the *arti* 'political importance' rather than that of a popular insurrection.[129] In fact the perceived danger had already passed. It cannot be insignificant, I would posit, that none of the statutes issued after 1271 cite the anti-conspiracy clauses. Put simply, they were no longer necessary.

[127] Lane 1971, pp.423-424.
[128] For this point, see Cessi 1981, p.254.
[129] Lane 1971, pp.244-245, 266 n.38. See also CAV, II, pp.xxvi-xxvii; Cessi 1952, p.9.

If Contarini's administration merely continued the process that had been so strongly implemented under Marino Morosini and Ranier Zeno, the subsequent maintenance of this status quo was certainly not without its difficulties. The later years of the thirteenth century were characterised by economic hardship: ongoing military campaigns led to higher taxation, and another, if smaller, popular revolt of unclear motivation was successfully suppressed in 1278.[130] The 1280s and early 1290s were similarly eventful. In 1289, on the death of Giovanni Dandolo, the populace acclaimed Giacomo Tiepolo as doge; the *grandi* opposed his election, just as they had done for the other two doges of his family, and this time they were successful, for their own candidate, Pietro Gradenigo, took the dogado.[131] If it is difficult to agree with Cracco's statement that Venice was on the brink of civil war, here his view of a governmental 'braccio di ferro' is more than tenable.[132] Gradenigo not only successfully enforced state stability by increasing the participation of the *populari* in the Great Council;[133] the *serrata* of 1297, which took place within his administration, effectively set into stone a pre-existing state of affairs, not only to curb the aspirations of the artisan class but also, as Lane puts it, 'to moderate the strife of factions.'[134]

It could be argued, though, that while the events leading up to 1297 did remove the spectre of any potential threat from the city's worker class, the *serrata* itself did not need to address the issue of popular political participation precisely because it had not been contemplated, neither by the patricians themselves nor – and this is significant – by those who may have been expected to demand it. Indeed, as Cessi argues, even the popular discontent of the 1260s appears to have been motivated by

[130] Cracco 1967, pp.298, 306-317.
[131] Ibid, pp.335-337.
[132] Ibid, p.327.
[133] Cracco 1967, pp.357-370.
[134] Lane 1971, p.237. See also Ibid, pp.252, 271 n.52.

feelings of economic hardship rather than any aspirations to government.[135] In fact these dramatic events appear to have simply represented a brief hiatus in the process of consolidating a political bed-rock that had been perfected over three dogal administrations.

A brief summary of the issues we have considered until now confirms that the model was not one of oppression but instead of containment. Giacomo Tiepolo's politics ultimately centred around forming a government more evenly divided between *grandi* and *popolari*, and also between mercantile patrician interests and those in the *terraferma*; and his revision of the civic statutes of 1242 was in lines with the desire to define the constitutional paradigm more clearly, not that of opening government to the population as a whole. Marino Morosini and Ranier Zeno, more biased towards mercantile interests, reinforced the template to render it virtually unassailable, and this is particularly clear in the case of the guilds. Yet while the statutes of 1270 and 1271 constituted a measured and deliberate governmental response to a perceived period of crisis, even the revision to the oath of loyalty did not change the fundamental characterisation of the *capitolari*: that of a document that balanced state control with a degree of practical autonomy, although rigorously within the context of the guilds' own collectives.

Here, in fact, analogies could be drawn with the situation in early fifteenth-century Florence, where documentation suggests that the administration imposed the drawing-up of statutes on its dependent towns and villages in order to circumscribe them more firmly within governmental control.[136] The sources are admittedly less dense for Venice than for quattrocento Florence, yet I would argue that the situation, although arguably more nuanced, had just as dramatic results. The placing of the

[135] For this reading, see also Cessi 1952, p.14.
[136] I am grateful to Professor Samuel K. Cohn, Jr. for suggesting this as a fruitful model for comparison.

statute-issuing process within an overall political trajectory prevented the city's workers, as Ruggiero put it, from becoming 'a revolutionary class fighting for a place at the top'; instead it ensured that 'they remained an orderly buffer group contributing towards the preservation of the commune.'[137]

The Collective Ideal and the 'Trade Reliefs'

The situation of the guilds in thirteenth-century Venice, then, rings strongly of the '*piccole repubbliche*' of which Memmo would so evocatively speak five centuries later. The regulation of the *arti* placed them within the bounds of a civic framework in which individual gain, indeed individual identity, was subsumed into a collective model characterised by a 'stretta sorveglianza da parte dei magistrati patrizi.'[138] But what does this tell us about the central question: whether they were in the position to directly engineer the inclusion of their images at the main portal and the Piazzetta?

Before addressing this matter, three observations can be drawn, and they tie into factors we have already examined in Chapter One. First, it is essential to bear in mind that the trade sculptures of both the basilica and the Piazzetta represent groups of artisans and traders, not individuals. This, then, would abundantly support the state-applied construct of the collective ideal, a concept that governmental regulation of the guilds took such care to stress. Second, in the city where, as Finlay puts it, 'the system triumphed over the individual,' the glorification of personal achievement appears to have been deliberately removed from Venice's civic shrine and its surrounding area.[139] The individual aggrandisement of religious/civic entities was kept separate from the shrine of the Evangelist, a division that even applied to the figure of the doge himself, for in the thirteenth century only Marino Morosini

[137] Cited in Brown 1988, p.21.
[138] Pullan 1981, p.9.
[139] Finlay 1980, p.34.

was actually buried at San Marco, with dogal memorials instead tending to be localised within the mendicant churches of Santi Giovanni e Paolo and the Frari.[140] Third and last, the case of later thirteenth-century statutes – where there is distinct terminological closeness in the descriptions of guild activities and that of their *scuole* – might imply a state policy of channelling the characterisation of the *arti* away from the devolvement of any activity that could be remotely politicised.[141] In these terms, could the state have placed a symbolic barrier between the basilica and any suggestion of movement beyond the limits of the collective model?

Within the political context of a government in the process of imposing the full weight of its constitutional will, the statutes of the guilds in themselves speak volumes. To coin the theory of Mackenney that I set out at the beginning of this chapter, the *capitolari* allowed limited 'associative' freedoms rather than the procuring of 'status' by executive, direct action. The *arti* were effectively bound by their regulation to the ideal of civic obedience within the frame of the collective good, and while they were not subject to oppression, their circumscription with the political paradigm was complete. In these terms, the images of work and workers at the state's own shrine could be regarded as a sophisticated visual and visible endorsement of the very rules that so contained the existence of example of Venice's artisans and tradesmen, as well a crystallisation of the ideal of metaphorical inclusion.

Here, in fact, one can once more draw analogies with Florence, and this in the visual sense. Two hundred years after the Venetian sculptures, a cycle of guild images at Orsanmichele in Florence appear to have given the minor *arti* of the city symbolic

[140] The sarcophagus of Marino Morosini in the atrium, however, does not appear to have been carved until the 1260s at the earliest. After the death of Andrea Dandolo, no further dogal burials were permitted at San Marco. See Fasoli 1973, p.287.
[141] For the nomenclature of the later thirteenth-century *capitolari*, see Bonfiglio Dosio 1997, p.607 and discussion in Chapter One.

recognition at the very time when their political clout within another oligarchy, this time centred on the more powerful guilds, was being progressively dismantled.[142] A similar reading of a politically-led imperative can, and I believe should, be applied to the 'Trade Reliefs' and Piazzetta column bases. As I proposed in Chapter Two, both cycles can be speculatively dated to Ranier Zeno's dogado; and it is striking that his administration was the frame for the build-up to a period of considerable popular tensions, the only period in fact where political instability within the lower ranks of the social framework risked compromising the very stuff of the Myth. Given this situation, I would not only propose that it is unlikely that the trade guilds were in a position to exert any real leverage as patrons; I would also argue that this was the very time in which politic recognition may have been viewed as a necessary part of the 'status association' that underpinned the realities of an uncompromising political process.

Yet even if the programme of the main portal was determined before Zeno's dogado – and bearing in mind, as we saw in Chapter Two, the 'Trade Reliefs' at least could be hypothetically dated to before 1253, the year of his accession – it is possible, indeed probable, that the project was fluid enough to take into account the development of subject matter according an increasingly particularised agenda. After all, as we have seen in this discussion, Zeno's administration merely consolidated the central principal that also underscored the rules of his predecessors, namely the circumscription of the ambitions of any smaller group within the global concern of the collective good. In these terms, the *arti* functioned as the means of containing the aspirations of the artisan class within the model of obedience to the state; and their images at the basilica and in the Piazzetta merely set the paradigm, as it were, into stone.

[142] Once more I am grateful to Professor Samuel K. Cohn, Jr. for suggesting this analogy, which in itself would present grounds for further comparison and investigation.

Conclusions

In conclusion to this chapter, I would argue that the policy the trade guilds crystallised – that of limited, internalised autonomy within the framework of the wider civic collective – provides us with a context for the patronage of the 'Trade Reliefs' and Piazzetta column bases. After all, both cycles appear to have been produced at the apex of constructing an inviolable regulative system around the *arti*, and as such I would suggest that the '*arti* argument' – namely that the guilds themselves directly commissioned the sculptures – is just as much a misrepresentation of actuality as the romanticised gloss that underpins Venice's own historiographical tradition. Visibility in the ritual and functional civic framework should not be confused with autonomy of action; and what underpinned the production these striking images was instead the dialectic between guilds and government, a relationship framed within the deliberate creation of an ideal civic structure in a city given its lifeblood and its fame by trade and tradesmen.

Chapter Four

"Indirect Donations"

Patronage, Procurators and Obligated Work

in the Insula Sancti Marci

Introduction: A Context for Patronage at San Marco

The political realities of the thirteenth-century trade guilds in Venice leave us with considerable food for thought. Their regulation was firmly stamped by the concept of collective allegiance to doge and state, giving them little if any executive role within a government in the course of consolidating an oligarchic model. In this sense, it can be strongly argued that the *arti*, proud but self-contained organisations, were not in the position to directly commission the 'Trade Reliefs' at San Marco, or indeed the Piazzetta sculptures nearby, and that both cycles, like the control applied to the guilds, were essentially a state-created product.

What now needs to be done, therefore, is to reframe the question of who was behind the images of urban work in terms of what *is* known about patronage in the *Insula Sancti Marci*. How was work commissioned at and around San Marco? And by whom? How was it funded? Is there any connection between this evidence and the selection of subjects in the sculptures themselves? And if not, how can we explain the enshrining of specific trading themes at the main portal and the Piazzetta?

In the first part of the discussion I will outline the role of the procuratia at the *opus*, balancing the sources edited by Cecchetti in his *Documenti per la Storia della Basilica di San Marco* – all of which refer only to the basilica itself – with the wider picture presented by the research of historians such as Mueller, Rando and Chambers, along

with the documents relevant to the *procuratori di San Marco* contained within Venice's state archive. In the second section, I will examine the potential connections between this framework and trade and commerce, especially in relation to the subjects of the 'Trade Reliefs' and the Piazzetta column bases. Here it will be my contention that as an institution, the procuratia served as the overall frame for artistic and civic patronage in the *Insula*, and this, moreover, in close relation to the trading and artisan activities carried out within its limits. Finally, I will place the remaining subjects of the sculptures in relation to the concepts of state policy, urban work and the visual expression of the civic collective within the *Insula Sancti Marci*. What will emerge is that the processes of patronage were intimately linked with the spiritual and functional concerns of the body politic, that the campaigns of civic works carried out in the duecento – the basilica and the Piazzetta amongst them – were by definition a state-led imperative, and, most significantly of all, that both the practical matter of their funding and the more symbolic matter of their visual expression operated in a direct dialectic with trade and industry.

The Documentation: Survival, Loss and 'Consuetudine'

Establishing the patterns of patronage at San Marco in the thirteenth century demands a comprehensive sweep of sources, and here the documentation falls into two categories. First, of course, there is the corpus of Venetian historiography, which in itself frames the development of the *Insula Sancti Marci* as the product of enduring *consuetudini* and defined governmental attitudes. The second body of sources consists of documents contained within the procurators of San Marco. Their *fondi*, later, like the office itself, split into related divisions – the *procuratia di San Marco de supra chiesa, de ultra* and *de citra* – hold numerous records of their duties;[1] and here, as we shall see, direct and concrete links can be drawn between the procurators' primary role as the chief

[1] For an outline of the holdings in the archives of the procuratia, see Strina Lanfranchi 1996, pp.552-555; Mueller 1971, pp.106-107.

financiers of the Venetian state and the gathering of funds for works at the basilica, the Piazza and the Ducal Palace. Such an undertaking, though, is inevitably marked by the patterns of loss that have affected the sources as a whole. Relatively little documentation survives for the thirteenth century itself, a dearth in itself already recognised in 1271, when the Great Council ordered that all the records of the procuratia were to be replaced as far as it was possible to do so, although what had occasioned the loss remains unclear.[2] Yet when we bear in mind the strength of *consuetudini* within the civic context as a whole, it is likely that later legislation reinforced pre-existing norms, and as such I will include such documentation when its relevance appears indisputable.

The Procurators at the Opus

The *opus* at San Marco was an organism whose impact extended to the whole of the *Insula Sancti Marci*, or, as Rando puts it in her invaluable study of the subject, 'l'intero complesso monumentale che dava l'immagine pubblica della Repubblica e ne esprimeva l'orgoglio.'[3] Setting the context for its discussion first of all necessitates a brief outline of the history and operation of the *opus*, especially in relation to the role of the procuratia of San Marco within its workings.

The inherent mythologising of Venice's historiographical tradition makes it difficult to establish when both *opus* and procuratia came into being. Later chronicles , for example, tend to place the foundation of both in the earliest days of the Republic; but since the procurators themselves often commissioned these histories, one suspects that this might be an attempt to give the offices a suitable gloss of antiquity.[4] Even with this

[2] ASV, *Procuratori di S.Marco de citra*, busta 369, fasc.1, fol.2r: '*le Commissarie perse dalla Procuratia siano rinovate con l'autorità del Mag.r Consiglio.*' See also Rando 1996, pp.111-112; Morozzo della Rocca and Lombardo 1940, p.ix..
[3] Rando 1996, p.96.
[4] For this point, see Mueller 1971, p.109; Demus 1960, p.53 n.207. Somewhat dramatically, Molmenti warns that the attempt to push the date of the procuratia's foundation to the earliest

reservation in mind, though, it is likely that some sort of organised *opus* would have been in existence to oversee the construction and embellishment of the first two incarnations of San Marco, as well the Contarini basilica that formed the canvas for the decoration programme of the duecento. It is open to question, however, whether there was a dedicated official supervising the running of the *opus* from the outset. The *Cronaca* of Gian Iacopo Caroldo cites a procurator, Leo Da Molin, in relation to the commissioning of bronze doors for the narthex in the 1120s;[5] yet the first reliable citation is contained within a financial contract or *securitas* of 1151, which mentions the role of a certain Otto Basilio; and in this sense the formalisation of a dedicated body to oversee the development of the basilica and the *Insula* probably found their political context in the early days of the *Comune veneciarium*.[6]

As a point of departure in investigating the role of the procurators at the *opus*, it is useful to examine their own statutes. These now exist only in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century registers, documents, however, that in all likelihood are based on earlier and continuous *consuetudini*.[7] Like those of the trade guilds themselves, the *capitolari* of the procurators are rigorous and specific, and like the former, they also place heavy emphasis on loyalty to the state-led collective. The second clause, for instance, consists of an oath to tend to the *opus* on behalf of the commune:

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days of the Republic was merely a result of 'la vanità e la servilità adulatrice.' Molmenti 1892, p.58.

[5] BM, *Cron.di Gian Iacopo Caroldo*, Ms.Cl.VII, cod.127, c.26 t. Cited as doc.808 in Cecchetti 1886, p.209. See also Forlati 1975, p.176.

[6] ASV, *Compilazione delle leggi*, busta 277, carta 128. Cited as doc.79 in Cecchetti 1886, p.9; Pozza 1994, doc.5; Mueller 1971, p.108. The *securitas* is known only in later copies, but Rando believes them to be reliable. Rando 1996, p.82.

[7] For the basis of the statutes in earlier norms, see Rando 1996, p.111.

Item erimus studiosi ad executiendum totum havere, et omnia bona que pro comuni venetiae deputata sunt, et erunt pro operis et laborerio ecclesie sancti Marci et pro aliis que deputata sunt, et erunt pro dicto opere.[8]

The other *capitolari* make it clear that the procurators' duties at the *opus* ranged from the functional to the symbolic.[9] They were responsible for hiring all the incumbents at the basilica, from choristers and musicians to canons and deacons; they undertook the distribution of wax candles or *cere*; and they administered the basilica's treasury on behalf of the state to an extent, as Mueller suggests, that its holdings were sometimes sold in order to fund military campaigns or ongoing works within the *opus* itself.[10]

Above all, the statutes make it abundantly clear that the procurators' initial and continuing responsibility was to organise the mechanics of building and decorative campaigns in the *Insula Sancti Marci*. One of the first *capitolari*, for example, consists of a document we have already examined in Chapter Two: the Great Council ruling of 1258 regarding the hiring of mosaic masters for the completion of the atrium. What is interesting about the ordinance in the present context, though, is its wording.[11] It cites the *magistri de muxe* as being specifically taken on by the *opus* of San Marco – '*ad Opus dictae Ecclesiae deputati*' – yet it does not specifically mention the supervisors of the *opus*, the procurators. Could this imply that other documents that impact the running of the procuratia may have slipped through the net of classification that led to the creation of its *fondi*? And could the document of 1258 have been included in the procurators' statutes as an early template for an enduring *modus operandi*?

[8] ASV, *Procuratori de San Marco de Supra, Chiesa*, Busta 1, fasc.1, *procuratori* 42, 1r. For the oath, see Chambers 1998, p.25.
[9] For an outline of the procurators' duties, see Bosisio 1969, p.42; Molmenti 1892, pp.69-70.
[10] Mueller 1971, pp.123, 128.
[11] ASV, *Procuratori di S.Marco de supra*, busta 78, *procuratori* 182, cap.c.1. See also Dorigo 1994, pp.34-36; Dorigo 1988, p.20; Mueller 1971, p.108; Demus 1960, p.53; Bettini 1954, p.22; Cecchetti 1886, p.12 doc.96; and also discussion in Chapter Two.

The other *capitolari* bear up the notion of the procurators being involved in every aspect of works at the basilica and in the *Insula* as a whole, especially when it came to the thorny matter of their financing. The third clause in the register of statutes, for instance, records a ruling of 1249 which stipulated that the procurators had to present accounts to the doge and Great Council for all work at the *opus*;[12] and another of 1316 added that all work over the value of 100 *soldi* could not be carried out without express governmental approval.[13] The statutes also include another Great Council ruling of 1258, this time decreeing that a procurator had to be present when any ruling relating to the procuratia was being deliberated.[14] That this dynamic of accountability to the state was not without its tensions is evidenced by the inclusion of a deliberation of 1302, which reiterated that the procurators were obligated to carry out any '*spesa*' at San Marco ordered by the doge.[15] Could this reinforce the reading that the procurators' statutes, like those of the guilds, were intended to consolidate earlier norms?

The defining importance of the statutes, however, is that they make apparent the level of supervision the procurators were expected to uphold at the *opus*. One *capitolare* states that no work could take place at San Marco without the presence of the *gastaldo* of the procurators;[16] and another stipulates that at least one procurator was required to be on site at all times when works were in process, whether at the basilica itself or at houses and *hostarie* owned by the procuratia:

> *Item quod aliquod laborerium, in Ecclesia Sti.Marci, nec in domibus, et hostarijs sancti Marci, nec in domibus furnitionum, et tutoria(e?), possit incipi, nisi nos*

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[12] ASV, *Procuratori de San Marco de Supra, Chiesa*, Busta 1, fasc.1, *procuratori* 42, 1v. See also ASV, *Procuratori de San Marco de supra, Chiesa*, Busta 72, processo 158, fasc.1, 13r; Mueller 1971, p.135.
[13] ASV, *Procuratori de San Marco de Supra, Chiesa*, Busta 1, processo 42, fasc.2, 17r.
[14] ASV, *Procuratori di S.Marco de citra*, busta 353: *Miscellanea norme emesse da varie magitsrature relative al funzionamento dei Procuratori di S.Marco;* Unnumbered fasc.entitled: *Alcuni documenti dal 1258 al 1599 relative alle Procuratie di S.Marco*, 2r.
[15] ASV, *Procuratori de San Marco de Supra, Chiesa*, Busta 1, processo 42, fasc.2, 37r.
[16] ASV, *Procuratori de San Marco de supra, Chiesa*, Busta 1, fasc.1, 6v, cap.34. For the *gastaldo* and other posts assigned to the procuratia, see Bosisio 1969, p.42.

procuratores, aut alter nostrum de voluntate alterius presens fuerit ad videndum dictum laborerium, incipiat, et ordinandum quomodo fieri debeat salsuis contentis in promissione Domini Ducis.[17]

Other *capitolari* illustrate the extent to which the procuratia's incumbency extended throughout the *Insula Sancti Marci*. The sixth clause states that work at the Ducal Palace also fell within their sphere of responsibility;[18] and an addition of 1339, included in the *Cronaca Magno*, orders that the procurators had to see to everything necessary for works there: '*Item poi etiam azonto i fu procurar al lavorier del palazo del doxe, et far lavorar come i serà ordenando, et de lo haver i serà dudo et spenderà tegnir conto et render raxon ogni anno ut supra.*'[19]

In some senses, however, the most revealing aspect of the procurators' role at San Marco lies within the very nomenclature of the title itself; simply put, they were responsible for 'procuring' both materials and artisans for works at the *opus*.[20] If the disposition of 1258 relating to the mag*istri de muxe* more than bears this reading out, another of 1309, which orders the procurators to see to the acquisition of more marble slabs for use at the basilica, hints at the consistencies within their responsibilities and practice.[21] Yet while such rulings probably illustrate earlier *consuetudini*, the inherent problem is that they shed relatively little light on the fundamental question: how the necessary funds for such projects were derived. Was there was any link between these economic concerns and trade and artisan activity within the Piazza and Piazzetta?

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[17] ASV, *Procuratori de San Marco de supra, Chiesa*, Busta 1, fasc.1, 7r, cap.37.
[18] ASV, *Procuratori de San Marco de Supra, Chiesa*, Busta 1, processo 42, fasc.1, 1v-2r.
[19] Correr, *Racc.Cicogna, Annali del Magno*, Cod.266, vol.2, c.113 t. Cited as doc.811 in Cecchetti 1886, p.209. This reading is borne out by another chronicle, which states that '*[the Procutarors]ebbero l'incarico della Fabbrica del Pub.o Palazzo....*' ASV, *Procuratori di S.Marco de citra*, busta 369, fasc.2, VII.
[20] Here I am grateful to Dr Louise Bourdua for the analogies she has suggested with the role of the procurators in church-building projects in the Veneto in the trecento. See also Bourdua 2004.
[21] ASV, Collegio, *Lettere* 1308-1310, c.28 t. Cited as doc.99 in Cecchetti 1886, p.13.

Separate Spheres: The Opus *Fund and the Procuratia as Financial Institution*

When we examine early documentation regarding the duties of the procurators, we can establish firm links between the *opus* and commercial concerns, and in fact these connections appear to have underpinned the procuratia's development into Venice's most eminent financial institution.

The first documentary mentions of the procuratia make it clear that initially at least, its economic role revolved above all around the funding of the *opus*. In these terms, it is significant that at this early stage, liquid assets appear to have been largely derived from the state itself. One chronicle, for instance, relates that under doge Pietro Orseolo the rebuilding of the basilica was continually funded by the government over a period of eighty years:

> *...fu poi deliberato nel tempo..[di]..Pietro Orseolo di refabricar la detta Chiesa di S.Marco, e fu provisto per il Ser.mo Mag. Cons.o di spendere p. 5000 all'anno delli danari del Comun in detta Fabrica, la qual spesa continuò per circa anni 80...*[22]

Yet with the first reliable mention of a procurator comes the idea that private individuals could also direct money to the *opus* at San Marco. In the *securitas* of 1151 cited above, the *Comune veneciarium* granted 1375 *lire* to Pietro and Giovanni Basilio of the parish of San Giovanni Cristonomo as recompense for '*duobus millibus librarum denariorum nostrae monetae*' that the brothers had previously given to Otto Basilio,

[22] ASV, *Procuratori de S.Marco de citra*, busta 369, fasc.2: *Memorie circa la storia dei Procuratori di S.Marco, VI: 'Tempi, ne'quali furono institute le Procuratie.'* For a similar version of events, see also BM, *Cronaca di Gian Iacopo Caroldo*, Cl.7, cod.127, c.26 t.

the procurator of San Marco, as a contribution towards the ongoing project of constructing the *campanile*.[23] As Rando argues, the shared name of brothers and procurator implies the use of the *opus* as the means to move liquid assets; and in this sense the *securitas* could be interpreted as early evidence for a financial machination between the public and private spheres.[24] Yet as Mueller states, the dynamic above all illustrates that in the affairs of the procuratia 'there was little dichotomy between private wealth and public policy.'[25] The gathering of funds for work in the *Insula* had the dual characterisation of a business concern and a state-driven imperative, and the practice of directing liquid assets to the procurators could be framed as the means to acquire status within the civic collective.

The most decisive step in the development of the procuratia from a supervisory to executive role, however, appears to have occurred from the later twelfth century onwards. Surviving wills and bequests from this time begin to cite the incumbent procurator as testamentary executor, with the motivation apparently to safeguard the economic interests of heirs and to direct money towards pious causes such as the care of the poor and to ecclesiastical institutions.[26] What the early documents make clear is that monies from wills could be directed towards the procuratia for safe-keeping, and equally so could other funds: the investment capitals known as *commissarie*, dowries and provisions for the care of widows, the insane and minors without guardians,

[23] ASV, *Compilazione delle leggi*, busta 277, carta 128. Cited as doc.79 in Cecchetti 1886, p.9. See also Pozza 1994, doc.5. For the later copies, see Rando 1996, p.82. For other sources relating to the *campanile*, see Norwich 1977 p.123; BM, *Cronaca anonimo del sec XIV*, Lat.Cl.10, cod.36, c.64 t, cited as doc.75 in Cecchetti 1886, p.9; BM, *Cronaca di Andeu Dandolo*, Lat.Cl.10, Cod.10, c.119, cited as doc.76 in Cecchetti 1886, p.9.
[24] Rando 1996, pp.82-83.
[25] Mueller 1971, p.220.
[26] For the procurators' role as testamentary executors, see Mueller 1997, pp.14-15; Mueller 1971, p.107. For the use of funds at the procuratia for '*opere pie*', see Rando 1996, p.94; Mueller 1971, pp.142-143, 185-215. For the few twelfth-century wills that did leave funds to the *opus*, see Rando 1996, p.91; and for the thirteenth century, the 1259 will of Marco Caravello: ASV, *Procuratori di S.Marco de citra*, busta 317 (1251-1502), n.568.

although the practice appears to have initially been in the form of a *consuetudine* that was then formalised into *lex* in 1284.[27]

Arguably most significant, though, is the fact by the first half of the duecento, the procuratia had become the holding house for *pegne* – securities for sums under legal dispute – and also for the private business transactions known as *colleganze* or *commende*. Interestingly, some mid- thirteenth century records of local *colleganze* relate to investments in *stazi* at Rialto; and as Mueller points out, many of those who deposited such funds with the procurators 'were artisans or heads of shops,' giving us one preliminary indication of the relationship between the procuratia and trade.[28]

The procuratia's assets were in fact so substantial by the first half of the thirteenth century that Innocent III strongly condemned its holding of death taxes, probably because such a function was detrimental to the papacy's own coffers.[29] Crucially, the funds were considerable enough for the state to draw upon them in times of particular need.[30] Around the mid point of the duecento, one such instance could have been constituted by the campaign against Genoa, the expenses for which appear to have caused general financial hardship and may, as we saw in the previous chapter, have directly led into the popular riot of 1264. While this theory can only remain speculation, the third Genoese war of the mid- fourteenth century did lead the Great Council to decree that properties held in trust by the procuratia '*ad pias causas*' should be sold to meet the escalating costs of the crisis, and there is no reason the believe that

[27] ASV, *Procuratori de San Marco de Supra, Chiesa*, Busta 1, processo 42, fasc.2, 9r; Chambers 1998, p.27, Rando 1996, p.93; Bosisio 1969, p.36. Rando dates the ruling to 1270 and Molmenti to 1272. Rando 1996, p.920; Molmenti 1892, p.61. It could be, however, that the 1284 law reiterated one or more earlier rulings. For the procuratia as a place of dowry deposits, see Mueller 1997, pp.395-402.
[28] See Ibid, p.163. See also Mueller 1997, p.158 and p.24 for the very few citations of artisan making such investments.
[29] Mueller 1971, p.130. See also Ibid, pp.133, 155-156, 220.
[30] Ibid, pp.127-128.

a similar action might not have occurred a century or so before.[31] What is certain for the duecento itself, however, is that there was a firm connection between the procuratia and another form of governmentally-decreed fund-raising: the practice of exerting forced loans on citizens of certain real estate worth. A register of such *prestiti* was kept at the procuratia as early as 1207, and it seems that the funds held by the procurators could be used for interest repayments on the behalf of doge and commune.[32]

There is also evidence to suggest that the procurators could, at least in some circumstances, generate income from the sums given to them in trust for civic purposes. In 1198, doge Enrico Dandolo drew on the *opus* to the tune of almost 3000 *lire* '*in oportunitatibus nostri Comunis*';[33] yet this practice or *consuetudine* was only formalised in the last years of the following century, and it appears to have been the exception rather than the norm.[34] Yet by the end of the thirteenth century, the procuratia's prestige as a banking institution ensured that foreign rulers chose to invest heavily; and if, as Deborah Howard suggests, private individuals were probably able to draw on the funds in the form of loans for trade ventures or other investment, a similar rationale might have applied to the state.[35] One ruling of the Great Council from 1296 states that the procurators were entitled to appropriate any *commissarie* left unclaimed after the death of the title-holder, and that they could also invest the same, although '*solamente ad utile*,' if the depositor had not specifically stated otherwise;[36] and in 1309, another ruling ordered that the procurators should '*non tengano inutili i dannari*

[31] Ibid, pp.196, 216. For the economic impact of the Third Genoese war, see also Mueller 1997, p.93.
[32] Rando 1996 p.89. For forced loans, see Luzzatto 1961, pp.34, 73-74; Sanudo 1900, vol.1, p.277.
[33] Cessi 1931, I, p.259. Cited in Mueller 1971, pp.215-216.
[34] Mueller 1971, pp.165-167. For the earliest documentary mention of this process in a will of 1282 (ASV, *Proc.Misti*, busta 157), see Ibid, pp.165-166.
[35] Howard 2000, p.63.
[36] ASV, *Procuratori de San Marco de Supra, Chiesa*, Busta I, processo 12, fasc.2, 21r.

de Mentefatti e Puppilli, et altri ad essi raccomandata, ma quelli investano in rapporto ad honesto guadagno.'[37]

It appears, though, that in practice there was little cross-over between the monies held in trust and the income destined for the *opus*. Records from the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries indicate, in fact, that emergency funds for work at the basilica were granted by the state itself; and one could posit that if funds for the *opus* could indeed be obtained from the wealth of *commissarie* deposited at the procuratia, communal funds would have not have had to been deployed at all. One particularly valuable piece of evidence is constituted by the will of doge Ranier Zeno of 1268, a copy of which is held in the state archive.[38] Despite the document's ruinous state of preservation, enough of its text survives to demonstrate that Zeno's considerable liquid and real estate assets, including no less than 132 *colleganze*, were to be held at the procuratia, and there are also indications of how they were to be directed.[39] Some were left in trust for his widow and his family; others were to be administrated by the procuratia as charitable endowments for various ecclesiastical institutions, including churches and the *Ospedale* or *Ospizio di San Marco* at the base of the *campanile*.[40] Yet somewhat surprisingly, while in their role as Zeno's executors, the incumbent procurators Marino Capello and Leonardo Venier are described as '*non tamquam procuratores sed nostros devotos et speciales amicos*', the will makes no financial provision for the *opus* itself.[41] Since a similar pattern emerges from a series of wills of 1251 to 1279 I have examined in the *fondo* of the *procuratori de ultra*, one can only conclude that the funding of the *opus* was regarded as a separate entity from the procuratia's role as a *locus*

[37] ASV, *Procuratori de San Marco de Supra, Chiesa*, Busta 1, processo 42, fasc.2, 40r; ASV, *Procuratori de San Marco de Citra*, Busta 369, fasc.1, 4r.
[38] ASV, *Procuratori di S.Marco de citra*, busta 235, fasc.11.
[39] For a detailed analysis of the provisions in Zeno's will, see Mueller 1971, p.199; Luzzatto 1961, pp.84-85. For Zeno's *colleganze*, Howard 2000, p.63; ASV, *Procuratori di S.Marco de citra*, buste 230-235.
[40] For the *Ospedale di S.Marco*, also called the *Ospedale Orseolo*, see Crouzet-Pavan 1992, p.169; Gattinoni 1910, p.319; De Kiriaki 1906, p.4.
[41] ASV, *Procuratori di S.Marco de citra*, busta 235, fasc.11.

accomendaciones.[42] In this sense, money for works at the basilica and in the Piazza would have had to be derived from other sources, and their possible provenance is a matter we shall explore shortly.[43]

As the office of the procuratia developed in the thirteenth century, a division of its responsibilities reflected the apparent distinction in the funds it held between private investments and *opus* income. From the time of the probable origins of the office in the twelfth century, the title of procurator was held by a single incumbent. In 1231, however, a second official was elected, a move judged necessary, according to the historiographical tradition, because the procurator already in office, Filippo Memmo, had been created ambassador to Constantinople and was thus unable to dedicate himself to what one chronicler describes as the '*molti Negotij della Chiesa*.'[44] One could argue, of course, that the fire that took place at the basilica in 1231 might indeed have generated the urgent need for another post; certainly it would have engendered more work – and more expense – for the procuratia and the *opus*. Overall, though, it seems likely that the second post was implemented in order to better address the rapidly-expanding financial remit of the procurator's office.[45]

In these terms, it does not seem coincidental that the creation of a third and fourth post -- the former in 1259 and the latter in either 1261 or 1266 (although as we saw in Chapter Two, the former date appears more likely) – appears to have occurred shortly before the procuratia's economic role was formalised in the 1280s.[46] Furthermore, it is also significant that a dedicated court for the procuratia's affairs, the *curia del*

[42] For this terminology, see Rando 1996, p.84.
[43] ASV, *Procuratori di S.Marco de ultra*, busta 2: Misc.Pergg.1251-1279.
[44] ASV, *Procuratori de San Marco de supra, Chiesa*, busta 72, processo 156, fasc.1, 1r. For a similar version of events, Molin, *Storia delli Procuratori*, BM, Ms.It.Cl.VII n.1564, fol.62v. For the date of 1231 for the second procuratorial post, ASV, *Procuratori di S.Marco de citra*, busta 369, fasc.2, V, Sandi: *Procuratori di S.Marco*, 2r-2v. See also Demus 1960, p.53 n.210; Marangoni 1933, p.73.
[45] For this reading, see also Mueller 1971, p.110.
[46] See discussion in Chapter Two.

procurator, was created around the mid point of the thirteenth century at precisely the same time as the procuratia passed from the direct jurisdiction of the doge to that of the Great Council.[47] This division in the procuratia's spheres of activity, however, becomes far more apparent in the early fourteenth century, when doge Pietro Gradenigo introduced new nomenclature to define the various roles of the institution. The *procuratia de citra* and *de ultra canale* were responsible for the financial business of supervising *commissarie*, the differentiations in their names being derived from the two segments of the city, above and below the Grand Canal, which were defined to streamline the process.[48] The *procuratia de supra Ecclesiam sancti Marci*, on the other hand, maintained the procurators' original duty of overseeing and funding works in the *Insula Sancti Marci*, as well as seeing to the essentially charitable function of administering the financial affairs of orphaned minors.[49] The classifications of the procurators have endured in the form of the names given to the *fondi* in the state archive, and it is that of the *procuratori de supra* that provides us with most, if not all, of the clues as to how the works at the *opus* would have been funded.

Workers and State: The Generation of Income for the Opus

The original and continual role of the procurators of San Marco – that of gathering income for the *opus* of San Marco – would have been a concern of particular importance in the thirteenth century. On one hand, the decoration campaign at the basilica would have been undoubtedly enriched by the spoils sent back to Venice after the sack of Constantinople, especially the '*molte tavole de marmo et colonne de porfido*

[47] Mueller 1971, pp.109, 119-120. For the deliberation of 1284, see n.26 above.
[48] Mueller 1971, pp.111-112.
[49] For an outline of this division of responsibity, see ASV, *Procuratori di S.Marco de citra*, busta 369, fasc.2, VI: *Tempi, ne'quali furono institute le Procuratie,* 1r-1v; Mueller 1971, pp.110-111. The titles are traditionally thought to have been given under doge Pietro Gradenigo in 1309. See ASV, *Procuratori di S.Marco de citra*, busta 369, fasc.2, VI: *Tempi, ne'quali furono institute le Procuratie*. By 1319 the number of procurators had increased to six: two *de supra*, two *de citra* and two *de ultra*. It rose dramatically during the remainder of the Republic. Later on, though, many of these posts were more of an honorary title than a practical duty, and one, moreover, that could be purchased. See Demus 1960, p.54; Bosisio 1969, pp.36, 38.

e marmoro con molto musaico' the *Cronica Magno* states to have been specifically intended for the ornamentation of '*la giexia de S.Marco.*'[50] But while the *spolia* may have provided both raw materials and the impetus for the campaign, other embellishments had to be newly created – the sculptures of the façades chief amongst them – and funds would have been required for a huge quantity of marble and mosaic, as well as the hiring and supervision of the workshops. As such, to cite one chronicle from the procurators' archives, the '*spese nel Sostenur il ritto, culto, e...fabrica di essa Chiesa*' would have been considerable.[51]

It is also clear that the works of the duecento were not limited to the basilica. As we saw in Chapter Two, the piazza being repaved under doge Ranier Zeno , a task of substantial expense that was carried out in or around the time that financial hardship in the city had provoked riots we discussed in Chapter Three; and the expenses involved in the repaving project would have increased in 1272, when the route from San Marco to Rialto via San Salvatore and the merceria, itself lined with shops and *botteghe*, was '*salisata de petra cocta.*'[52] In itself, furthermore, the raising of the Piazzetta columns – a project that as I also argued in Chapter Two can also be dated to around the same time – would have carried considerable financial weight. Since it is all but certain that such monies would not have been derived from the procuratia's holdings as an investment bank, other evidence must be sought to define how the mechanics of this patronage would have been funded.

The earliest sources to this effect date from shortly after the establishment of the *Comune veneciarium*, and in the main they illustrate how the *opus* was at least at first provided with a certain amount of income via private bequests. In 1161, for instance,

[50] BM, *Cronaca Magno*, It.Cl.7, Cod.517, c.67 t. Cited also as doc.87 in Cecchetti 1886, p.11.
[51] ASV, *Procuratori de San Marco de Supra, Chiesa*, Busta 2, processo 66, fasc.1, unnumbered page.
[52] ASV, *Compilazione Leggi*, busta 357, 225r-v. See also Cecchetti 1884, p.42; Crouzet-Pavan 1992, p.197.

Vilio Vilio of the *confinio sancti Marci* left all his land and property to the procurators and *opus* so that the income could be used in perpetuity for the glory of God and Evangelist.[53] It is also not coincidental that doge Sebastiano Ziani, himself of almost legendary wealth, is also reported to have donated a swathe of real estate to San Marco:

> *Nel MCLXXXVIIII morite messer Sebestian Ziani inclito Doxe el qual lasso per la fabbrica conservation et honor divino ala chiexia de messer S.Marco grande parte del suo stabelle et caxe de le quale mai la chiexia de messer San Marco et conseguentemente i signori procuratori di essa non ano pagato ne sono sta astriti pagar ne fation ne decime ne latre angarie de la terra et questo per le continue spexe si in reparation de essa chiexia chomo ne i divini offitii et reparation de le caxe....* [54]

By funding these 'continual repairs' to the church fabric, Ziani's bequest may well have set a precedent for the connection between piety, civic devotion and the *opus* of San Marco; other late twelfth-century wills include provisions for the conservation and embellishment of the basilica, as does that of Sebastiano's son Pietro Ziani.[55] Overall, though, these private donations are the exception rather than the norm, for twelfth- and thirteenth-century testamentary practice placed far more emphasis on investment of *commissarie* at the procuratia than bequests to the *opus* itself.

From the outset, in fact, the holdings of the *opus* appear to have chiefly benefited from other sources of income. Notably, certain of these were linked to the state's trading

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[53] ASV, *Atti Diplomatici*, I e II serie n.79. Cited as doc.80 in Cecchetti 1886, pp.9-10.
[54] ASV, *Procuratori di S.Marco de supra*, filza 3, procuratori.48, fasc.1. Cited as doc.84 in Cecchetti 1886 p.11. Ziani also left a fortune in precious stones and jewels that in 1209 was added to the *Pala d'Oro*. See Cecchetti 1886 p.11 docs 88 and 89. For Ziani's reputation as 'the richest man in Venice', see Lane 1973, p.35; Lane and Mueller 1985, p.138; Mutanelli 1841, p.49.
[55] For Pietro Ziani's will, see *Archivio di San Giorgio*, processo 117. Cited in Romanin 1973, pp.210-211.

outposts. In a bull issued by doge Vitale Michiel in 1164, for example, the *opus* was allocated a sum of 300 *bizantios* from a previous benefice that had originally been bestowed and then renegaded by the Latin rulers of Jerusalem. In addition it was granted the revenue from communal possessions in Tyre and Tripoli, including that from the bakers' ovens in the Venetian quarters of each city, with the money to be given into the control of the incumbent procurator of San Marco, Leonardo Fradello, as a perpetual concern for the 'use and honour' of the *opus*.[56] A bull doge Sebastiano Ziani issued in 1175 both reconfirmed and expanded the terms of the previous decree. It is more specific about what types of trading concerns at Tyre would be used to channel income to the *opus*, including proceeds from the market-place as a whole, those from the baking ovens and mills, and the rents from the measurers of wine and oil:

> *Concedimus et damus tibi ei ipsi operi omnes redditus de portu et de introitu portarum platearum, et omnes redditus de fonticis, balneis, furnis, stateris, rubis et de mensuris vini et olei, et redditus de molendinis, et daciones de vitro, et universas daciones et redditus quantcunque sunt et nobis pertinent. Omnia, ut superius dictum est, ipsi operi et tibi damus et concedimus habere et possidere usque ad iam dictos quinque annos...*[57]

The territorial expansion after the Fourth Crusade meant that this dynamic between the *opus* and trade out with Venice was repeated and increased.[58] Demus, for instance, speaks of 'payments from the overseas settlements, colonial taxes, dues, the income of the churches of St. Mark in the Venetian settlements abroad, and so forth' being

[56] BM, Lat.Cl.14, Cod.71, p.5. Cited as doc.81 in Cecchetti 1886, p.10; Pozza 1994, doc.18. For the donation, see also Luzzatto 1961, p.17.
[57] BM, Lat.Cl.14, Cod.71, c.7. Cited as doc.82 in Cecchetti 1886, pp.10-11.
[58] For the expansion of Venetian economic interests in the east after the Fourth Crusade, see Luzzatto 1961, p.62.

directed to the *opus* on a considerable scale.[59] But was a similar method employed in Venice itself?

Here it is useful to turn once more to the *Cronaca Magno*, which, rightly or wrongly, positions both the establishment of the procuratia and the first manifestations of these modes of funding within the dogado of Domenico Contarini. It relates:

> *In tempo di questo Doxe fo fondado la giesia nuova de San Marcho.....Sono alguni pensa ahora, con laudo del populo esser statuido uno procurator, el qual fo chiamado de l'opera della giesia de San Marcho; al qual fo inzonto scuoder tuto lo haver che per el Comun de Veniexia era et sarà deputado per la opera et lavorier dela dita giesia; et far ogni utile in amplificar diti beni et edificar le case et statii a dita opera et giesia deputadi, et el fito scuoder non usando eso naver in altro noma in essa opera; et el stado di quella conservar, zoè tuti i beni del comun i vignerà inele man salvar et tegnir conto, et far de quelli quello li serà comeso; al qual poi inzonto fu ogni anno render raxon a quei boni homeni che preerat a recever le raxon per el Comun de Veniexia.*[60]

What emerges here is an outline of how the *opus* was to be funded. Not only were the procurators held to account for proceeds from communal possessions, but their liquid assets were derived from real estate within Venice itself, namely 'houses and market stalls' devolved to the procuratia's ownership.[61] Interestingly, the account in the *Cronaca* appears to have been based on the evidence provided by the statutes of the procurators themselves. The third *capitolare*, for instance, expressly states that income was to be generated for the *opus* through the renting out of such properties:

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[59] Demus 1960, p.53.
[60] MC, *Raccolta Cicogna, Annali del Magno*, Cod.266, vol.2, c.113t. Cited as doc. 811 in Cecchetti 1886, p.209.
[61] For the Procurators as landlords, see Mueller 1997, p.41.

Studiosi quoque erimus in faciendis operibus supradictis, et omnibus aliisque ad dictum opus, atque utilitatem ipsius pertinent, et pertinebunt, et etiam in amplificandis redditibus predicti operis, et in affictandis domibus, et stationibus ad dictum opus, et ecclesiam pertinentibus, sicut melius fieri poterit et totum illud habere, redditibus, et introytus, quod et quos pro dicto opere...receperimus, vel intromisserimus, sum in officis procurationis iam dicte steterimus bona fide saluabimuns ad utilitatem predicti operis, et illud ponemus inscriptis in nostris quadernis, et illud quod expendiderimus ad ipsius operis utilitatem expendemus, et ponemus in scriptis in nostris quaternis vel scribi faciemus si habuerimus impedimentum quod non possimus scribere.[62]

The jurisdiction of the procurators, then, was over the *Insula Sancti Marci* in its entirety.[63] They were the recipients of rent from stalls and *botteghe* in the Piazza area, with *consuetudini* from the twelfth century firmly linking the *opus* to trading activities. It was only in the later years of the next century, however, that this status was formalised. In 1296, a ruling of the Great Council stated that the procurators were the overseers of stalls in the Piazza – '*procuratori siano superiori delli banchi di Piazza*' – a measure that might have been intended to reinforce norms being challenged by the traders who had to pay the rents in the first place.[64] That the control of the procurators may not have been welcome is also implied by a clause of 1296 stated that anyone who broke the regulations had to pay a fine of 20 *soldi* to the body which policed their enforcement, the *signori di notte*.[65] In itself, though, the process of enforcement does

[62] ASV, *Procuratori de San Marco de Supra, Chiesa*, Busta 1, fasc.1, *procuratori* 42, 1r-1v.
[63] For this judgement, see also Crouzet-Pavan 1992, p.277.
[64] ASV, *Procuratori de San Marco de supra, Chiesa*, Busta 1, processo 42, fasc.2, 70 r. See also Cessi 1931, III, p.399. In 1319, the ruling was reiterated and extended to include all properties belonging to the Commune in the Piazza area. ASV, *Procuratori de San Marco de supra, Chiesa*, Busta 33, processo 67, fasc.1, 45r.
[65] ASV, *Procuratori de San Marco de supra, Chiesa*, Busta 1, processo 42, fasc.2, 32r-32v. That this ordinance was not always obeyed is illustrated by its more forceful reiteration in 1401(ASV,

not appear to have been unruffled. In a measure of 1315, the Great Council ordered that the *signori di notte* stamp down on dishonest trading practice within the areas controlled by the procuratia, namely the basilica, the Piazza and the portico of the Ducal Palace:

> *Cum multa inhonesta et turpia committantur in Ecclesia et porticu et plathea Sancti Marci que bene corrigi non possunt per procuratores, et suos officiales et etiam sub Porticu Palatij. Capta fuit pars q(che?) committintur dominis de nocte q ordinent suis custodibus deputatis ad custodiam plathae q facere et observare debeant omnia que eis dixerint et commifserint procuratores vel gastaldiones ipsorum ex parte ipsorum procuratores occasione predicto.*[66]

Other documents support the notion that the direction of income from trade in the Piazza to the funding of the *opus* was standard practice, although most of them focus on one of the chief areas with the procuratia's remit: works at the Ducal Palace. One decree issued by the Great Council in 1269, for instance, specified that the procurators must make use of the income from their possessions for work there: '*quod procuratores Sancti Marci teneantur et debeant facere aptari palacium de havere et intratis Sancti Marci.*'[67] A ruling of 1280 is more precise about the source of such funds, stating that the portico and other areas of the Ducal Palace could be rented to traders by the procurators in order to undertake roofing work: '*Portico, et altre Camere del palazzo, che hanno le porte de fuori siano commesse alli proc.ri di S.Marco, di*

Procuratori de San Marco de Supra, Chiesa, Busta 33, processo 67, fasc.1, 9v-10r). For the *Signori di Notte* – who were subject to the immediate authority of the *procuratori di San Marco a* and who could also refer general matters of concern within the arti to the state – see Monticolo 1891, p.178; Crouzet-Pavan 1992, pp.277, 826; Lane and Mueller 1985, pp.151-152, 483.

[66] ASV, *Procuratori de San Marco de supra, Chiesa*, Busta 33, processo 67, Fasc.1, 1 r. See also ASV, *Procuratori de San Marco de supra, Chiesa*, Busta 1, processo 42, fasc.2, 70r.

[67] Cited in Lorenzi 1868, p.2 as doc.5. For a similar ruling of 1288, see Ibid, p.3 doc.10.

poter quelle affitar....Et faccino coprir il palazzo.'[68] In 1303, the procurators were ordered to see to the maintenance of the wells and courtyard of the Ducal Palace 'a *spese delli affitti, che ricavano delle Case*;'[69] and two decades later, works at the chapel of San Nicola and ornamentation of the ceremonial staircase at the palace were devolved into the hands of the procurators to be funded from '*introytus & affictus Palatij.*'[70]

Overall, in fact, the evidence indicates that the mechanics of funding the *opus* were firmly connected to the trades specifically carried out in the Piazza and Piazzetta. Let us consider the cases of three of the trades shown in the 'Trade Reliefs': the selling of fish and meat, and the consumption of wine in the *osterie*, for which documentation survives from the 1260s onwards. The first extant source for the selling of fish, for instance, concerns the proceeds of rents of *pescivendoli* trading at the *pescaria di San Marco* in 1269, which was probably already in its later position on the Molo. It reads:

> *Anno 1269 mensis Novembris die prima, Indictione decima tertia. Incepimus scribere fictus affitto... et alios Introytus per minutum Operis Ecclesie Sancti Marci ad rationem denariorum grossorum.*
>
> *Anno millesimo ducentesimo sexagesimo nono, die septimo intratis mensis Decembris in Die Sancti Nicolai. Incipit terminus Piscarie, et debent solvere libras 52 ad grossos, et sunt Consueti solvere in principio anni pro toto anno.*[71]

[68] ASV, *Procuratori de San Marco de supra, Chiesa*, Busta 1, processo 42, fasc.2, 68 v. See also ASV, *Procuratori de San Marco de supra, Chiesa*, Busta 55, processo 106, fasc.1, 1r. For the renting of the portico area to traders, see also Schulz 1992-1993, p.137.
[69] ASV, *Procuratori de San Marco de supra, Chiesa*, Busta 1, processo 42, fasc.2, 24r. See also ASV, *Procuratori de San Marco de supra, Chiesa*, Busta 55, processo 106, fasc.1, 19r.
[70] ASV, *Procuratori de San Marco de supra, Chiesa*, Busta 33, processo 67, fasc.1, 45v. See also discussion in Chapter Five.
[71] ASV, *Procuratori de San Marco de supra, Chiesa*, Busta 32, processo 66, fasc.1, 1r.

This document is revealing in two ways. First, it indicates that the *pescaria* of San Marco was directly under the ownership of the procurators, to whom all traders who worked there had to pay a yearly rent. Second, the ruling clearly states that the proceeds from these rents were directed to the *opus* itself, and thus by extension the works the procurators supervised there.

A similar dynamic between sellers and procurators appears to have operated with the hostelries, the bread sellers and the meat trade in Piazza San Marco. In 1280, the procuratia's ownership of stands for vintners in the portico of the Ducal Palace was confirmed, with the proceeds being directed towards the roofing of the palace itself – '*faciant coprire palacium sicus melius*' – and any other expense thought fit by the commune.[72] That this practice continued is made evident by a register in the *fondo* of the *procuratori de supra chiesa*, which preserves records of rents payable to the procurators from inns and taverns in the *Insula* as a whole; although they date to the fourteenth century onwards, one suspects that here too earlier records may simply have been lost, and this certainly appears to have applied to the bread-sellers, whose records, as we noted above, do not survive for the medieval period itself.[73] That the meat-market or *becaria* of San Marco was also run as a procuratorial concern to the benefit of the *opus*, on the other hand, is unequivocal. A directive of 1318, for example, orders its stall-holders to increase the rents they paid to the procurators from 180 to two hundred *libri* as payment for improvement works carried out there: '*Quod Beccharia Sti.Marci que hucusq soluir Procuratoribus Sti.Marci libras centi octuaginto + affitti solvere debeat de cetero librus ducentos cum Procuratories fecerim plures expensas in*

[72] '*et utilius expedire viderint pro comuni.*' Cited in Lorenzi 1868, pp.2-3 as doc.7.
[73] For the ruling of 1280, see ASV, *Procuratori de San Marco de supra, Chiesa*, Busta 1, fasc.1, 10v, cap.52. For the register of rents, most of which date from the fourteenth to the sixteenth centuries, see ASV, *Procuratori de San Marco de supra, Chiesa*, Busta 32, processo 64, fasc.1: *Scritture contro gli Affituali dell'Osteria del Selvatico dal 1369 al 1575.* The *fascicolo* also mentions other *osterie* than the *Selvatico* under Procuratorial ownership: the Capello, the *Peregrin*, the *Rizza*, the *Cavalletto*, the *Luna* and the *Lion*.

laborerijs dilla Beccharie.'[74] Clearly the connection of trade to the *opus* could work both ways, and was in practice both a considerable addition and a substantial drain on the finances of the procurators of San Marco.[75]

A valid question, of course, is whether other trading activities had direct impact of the financing of the *opus*. There is unfortunately no trace of the dairy merchants, the barbers and dentists and the cobblers in the *fondi* of the procurators; yet at the same time it is difficult to conceive of a situation in which they did not pay their dues to the procuratia in its role as the landlord within the *Insula* as a whole. One activity that is documented from the fifteenth century onwards, however, is that of the fruit and vegetable sellers (*erbaroli*). A document of 1480 states that they were to operate in the Piazzetta, and it also gives the rather engaging anecdotal detail that their trade was limited to the selling of herbs, melons and courgettes.[76]

It is equally possible that trades not shown in the 'Trade Reliefs' themselves were affected by a similar dynamic. The only such record I have found dates to 1505, and relates to one fundamental industry: that of wool production. The decree states: '*Che aciù la procuratia possa Continuar nella riparazione della Chiesa di S.Marco, sia accolta dal pagamaneo di decima alla Signoria par li lanafficis...*' [77] The tithes of the wool guild, therefore, were directed to the *opus* specifically for the repair of the basilica itself. At this juncture, it is useful to consider why the wool trade is not represented in the 'Trade Reliefs' or in the Piazzetta column bases. One potential reason is suggested by Mackenney, who points out that in contrast to that of cotton, silk and fustian, wool

[74] ASV, *Procuratori de San Marco de supra, Chiesa*, Busta 32, fasc.1, processo 65, unnumbered page. For the same ruling, see also ASV, *Procuratori de San Marco de supra, Chiesa,* Busta 1, processo 42, fasc.2, 7r.
[75] For the dynamic between the *pescivendoli*, the *panattaroli*, and the stallholders at the *becaria* and the *opus*, see also Crouzet-Pavan 1992, pp.939-940.
[76] ASV, *Procuratori de San Marco de supra, Chiesa,* Busta 41, processo 85, fasc.2, unnumbered page. Cited in Crouzet-Pavan 1992, p.941 and n.317.
[77] BM, Marc.Mss.It.Cl.VII, n.1718 (8657): '*Carte relative alla Procuratia di San Marco*', 12r.

production was relatively little-developed in Venice in the thirteenth century, possibly as a matter of deliberate governmental policy in order to avoid the level of social conflict that the power of the industry had occasioned elsewhere.[78] More prosaically, however, one could offer that cloth production had more to do with the mercantile and thus patrician business of import and export than with home-grown artisan activity, which, after all, is the focus of the 'Trade Reliefs' and Piazzetta column bases alike.

In fact the absence of the cloth trades in both cycles would, in fact, adhere to the interpretation we examined in Chapter One: a selection of those activities that adheres to the ecclesiastical emphasis on manual work rather than those that engaged with *lussuria*. In itself, this line of thinking would go some way towards accounting for the discrepancy between the presence of the mercers and goldsmiths in Martino Da Canal's description of the guild procession of 1268 and their absence within the sculptures at San Marco.[79]

Here, in fact, two useful points can be added. Firstly, the sumptuary laws of the fourteenth century limited the trade in gold and jewels to the Rialto, forbidding it at San Marco. The only exception was the fair of *la Sensa*, held in the Piazza and also run by the procurators of San Marco, which did emphasise more lucrative activities to the detriment of those to do with daily staples, but arguably, as Crouzet-Pavan suggests, only because such an event needed to be held 'dans un espace commercial plus vaste' than that which another location could provide.[80] Secondly, such industries were removed from the Piazza itself and thus the jurisdiction of the procurators. The cloth merchants operated from the Merceria, for example, and the dyers worked on the

[78] Mackenney weighs up this notion of social engineering with the more prosaic fact that Venice did not have a large enough fresh water supply to support a large-scale wool industry. See Mackenney 1997, p.21; Mackenney 1987, pp.14-15. For the state attitude towards the wool trades in general, see Luzzatto 1961, pp.69-70. For the other cloth industries, see also Brunello 1980-1981, pp.113-154.
[79] For this idea, see Tigler 1993, p.163.
[80] Crouzet-Pavan 1992, pp.942-943.

Giudecca for the prosaic reason that the smell from their vats might have caused offence in the central inhabited area in Venice itself. It could be, therefore, that the choice not to represent these trades in the sculptures at San Marco and the Piazzetta was one informed by both symbolic and functional criteria.

Another case, though, is a little more nuanced: that of the *erbaroli*. Undoubtedly they would have sold their wares in the Piazzetta alongside their fellow traders in bread, fish and meat; why, then, do they not appear in the 'Trade Reliefs'? While any argument can only be speculative, here I would offer one possibility: that given the nature of Venice's urban development, most fruit and vegetables sold in the city would have been essentially imported from elsewhere, with locations for cultivation being primarily outlying islands in the lagoon and, quite possibly, Venetian possessions in the *terraferma*, which in this period were in fact not as insubstantial as is often supposed. Could the selective principal operating in the sculptures quite deliberately revolved around those products manufactured and sold in the city itself? And in contrast, could the appearance of the fruit sellers on the socle of the column of St. Mark in the Piazzetta have operated as a far more factual reference to the activities actually taking place there?

Certainly the specific links to the trading structures in place in the Piazza apply as much to the Piazzetta as they do to San Marco itself. The representation of fish selling on the column bases might well refer to the *pescaria*, situated nearby and run for the *opus* by the procurators; and the same argument would apply to the meat sellers of the *becaria*, also in the vicinity and also administered by the procuratia. Here too are the *panattaroli*, and the wine merchants who supplied the taverns that also directed rents to the *opus*. It is this mode of income, then, that ties the Piazzetta subjects to their environment, not any notional symbolism; and indeed Schlink reinforces the idea that it was the procurators who would have been in charge of the commission of the Piazzetta

column bases, and one wonders why a similar interpretation has not been explicitly applied to the 'Trade Reliefs' themselves.[81]

Let us draw some preliminary conclusions. The *Insula Sancti Marci* was not only the visual embodiment of Venice's civic ideals; it was also a business concern. While the majority of the surviving sources date to the period after the production of the 'Trade Reliefs' and Piazzetta column bases, it is not unreasonable to suppose that these funding methods were based on established *consuetudini*; certainly the procuratia's related evolution into a financial institution in the course of the duecento reflected its success in its original and continual role of garnering liquid assets for the *opus*. Furthermore, the chief focus in the *Insula* was trade, and this both for the promotion of Venice as an economic powerhouse and a source of revenue for the shaping of that image. Since the funding the *opus* was perceived as both as a civic necessity and an ongoing, intensely practical process, it was placed firmly in the remit of the procurators of San Marco, whose own work was financed directly by the proceeds from commercial activities in the area under their jurisdiction. In these terms, the work of the traders and artisans depicted in the sculptures relating to the sale of food did contribute towards the existence of the 'Trade Reliefs' and the Piazzetta column bases; put simply, the rents they paid to the procurators constituted an indirect donation to the *opus*.

A pertinent question, though, is how to link the procuratia and its guiding principals to the trades of the basilica reliefs that do not relate to the service industries or the selling of food in the Piazza itself. Here it is essential to underline that these subjects – the coopers, the smiths, the caulkers, the builders and the shipwrights – can be grouped under the same classification, and one moreover of prime state importance: ship construction.

[81] Schlink 1985, pp.38-40.

As an institution, the arsenal was very much a government organism, even if it did not constitute the locus of a state monopoly; as Crouzet-Pavan points out, in fact, the private boatyards or *squeri* were also used for communal purposes to which the government supplied both materials and worker salaries.[82] Yet while here too the discussion is impaired by a lack of early sources, there do appear to have been firm links between the arsenal and the *opus*. One decree of 1333, for instance, orders that former is to be used as the depository for building materials for the use of the latter: '*Quia procuratores ecclesia sancti Marci habent deffectum loci mi quo possint fare collacari et conservari lignamina, & Alia laborario Et res communis deputata pro operi ecclesie Sancti Marci, propter, Arsenatu, qui sibi accipitur.*'[83] Two other documents, which like the first might well be based on earlier *consuetudini*, further reinforce the model. One, unfortunately undated, cites the procurators as the recipients of rents from certain privately owned *squeri* in Castello;[84] and an ordinance of 1422, stated to be based on a precedent of 1276, directs that the *padroni* of the arsenal had to supply fifty workers who should present themselves with arms in the Piazza whenever demanded by the procurators.[85] Overall, then, this evidence would appear to support three factors: that both the *squeri* and the arsenal were used for governmental ship production, that they were strongly linked to the procuratia and *opus*, and that the inclusion of their activities in the 'Trade Reliefs' could at least in part be interpreted as the symbolic framing of a required allegiance to the governmentally-led civic collective.[86]

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[82] Luzzatto 1961, p.66. For the overall notion of state service at the arsenal, see also Bonfiglio Dosio 1997, p.587.
[83] ASV, *Procuratori de San Marco de Supra, Chiesa*, Busta 33, processo 67, fasc.1, 50v.
[84] ASV, *Procuratori di S.Marco de citra*, busta 353: *Miscellanea norme emesse da varie magistrature relative al funzionamento dei Procuratori di S.Marco*, fasc.4, unnumbered folio.
[85] ASV, *Procuratori de San Marco de Supra, Chiesa*, Busta 1, processo 42, fasc.2, 52r-52v. For the Great Council deliberation of June 6th 1276, see Concina 1984, p.24 n.31; Cessi 1931, p.244.
[86] For the argument that the arsenal and the *squeri* were equally important in communal shipbuilding, see Crouzet-Pavan 2002, p.140. One document of 1391 (thus only of outside relevance for our discussion) demonstrates that procuratia also had impact on the funding of the arsenal; it orders that the *procuratori de citra* lend the *padroni* of the arsenal three thousand

Government and Artisans: Symbolic Donation at San Marco

Patronage at San Marco appears, then, to have been a remarkably homogenous process. The primary sources show that the procurators organised every aspect of work both at San Marco itself and the surrounding area: the decoration campaign at the basilica, improvements at the Ducal Palace, the paving of the Piazza and the development of the Piazzetta as a ceremonial and practical urban space. The costs of this work would, of course, have been immense; and while the *opus* could and did receive a series of grants from public funds and private donations, the onus was also to maintain a steady flow of income. The procuratia, as the designated governmental body, not only owned a quantity of *botteghe* and *stazi*; its officials also rented them out to certain traders and artisans, not least many of the ones depicted within the 'Trade Reliefs' and Piazzetta column bases. In these terms, the rents and tithes garnered from these workers and tradesmen constituted a symbolic act of indirect donation.

What this reading does little to explain, however, is the presence of other activities in the sculptures, and this is particularly applicable to the 'Trade Reliefs.' The *fondi* of the procurators at the state archive do not contain thirteenth-century documentation for the activities of the barbers, smiths and cobblers, for instance; nor can the connection of the procurators to ship building fully explain the strong emphasis placed on the various stages in boat-construction in the 'Trade Reliefs'. Can other criteria be established to link these urban workers to the overall concept of "donating" their labours to the state, either in rent or in kind?

ducats in order to pay the wages of *marangoni* and *calafati* who had constructed fourteen new galleys. ASV, *Procuratori di S.Marco de citra*, busta 369, fasc.3, VI, *Procuratores Sancti Marci*, 2r. For the same riling, see also ASV, *Procuratori di S.Marco de citra*, busta 369, *Libro Misti/Libri quarti*, 3r.

In the event, one line of argument is presented by a concept that has not, to my knowledge, been connected to the 'Trade Reliefs': that of obligated homage to the state. One area into which substantial research has been undertaken, that of civic ritual, represents a starting point for such a reading. In this context, scholars such as Fasoli, Muir and Mackenney have underscored that the ceremonial expression of the guilds' devotion to their government carried its own burden. While Martino Da Canal's narration of the *arti* procession of 1268 might be rather breathless in its enthusiasm, what the account does not stress is that the homage the guilds paid to the new doge was not a choice but an obligation, and one, moreover, that exerted considerable financial weight. By the fourteenth century, for instance, non-attendance in such processions was subject to a considerable fine;[87] and by the same period, the guilds had the express duty of providing the decorations for dogal coronations in certain rooms of the Ducal Palace.[88]

In fact the obligation for the guilds to participate in civic ceremonial appears to have been based on long-standing precedents. The festivities surrounding one of the most boisterous events in the civic calendar, *Giovedì Grasso*, provide one notable example. While the ritual probably had its origin in the second half of the twelfth century, it is first documented in the *promissione* of doge Ranier Zeno of 1253. Here the clause relating to the festivities reads as follows: '*Gastaldus fabrorum ponit ferrum ad baculus [baculum] et ad çonos quibus ultimur nos dux in predicto die iovis venationis.*'[89] The role of the guild concerned, the smiths (*fabbri*), was thus relatively complex: to forge iron-clad staffs, to chase and incite bulls and pigs released into the Piazza, then to catch the beasts, behead them and butcher them, with the meat distributed first to the doge and his councillors and then to the city's poor. That the

[87] Cecchetti 1884, p.41.
[88] Fasoli 1973, p.289.
[89] ASV, Cod. 277 "*ex-Brera*" , c.13 B. Cited in CAV, II, pp.329-330. The same disposition is repeated in the *promissioni* of Lorenzo Tiepolo (July 1268) and Giovanni Soranzo (July 1312).

consuetudine was an established protocol is confirmed, in fact, by its appearance in the smiths' own statutes of 1271.[90] What is apparent, then, is that the obligation of the *arte* was symbolic of its role in upholding even the more idiosyncratic aspects of the civic collective.

It seems, in fact, that this sphere of the guild-state dynamic reinforced a still older tradition: that of obligations owed by the workers to the government, especially in the form of "gifts." The practice is first explicitly recorded in Giacomo Tiepolo's *promissione* of 1229, which mentions the enforced donation of boats and hay and wine – '*gundula et feno et vino*' – from Venice's dependent settlement of Chioggia.[91] Here, unfortunately, the context and the origins of the homage are unclear. What does appear evident, however, is that the process of obligation worked both ways. In 1141, for instance, the town of Fano undertook to pay the Republic an annual tribute of 1000 measures of oil for the lighting in San Marco, with their recompense being Venice's political and military protection.[92]

By the thirteenth century, the idea of these donations – which the documents term as *regalie* – had been expanded in direct relation to the *arti*. In the statutes of the oil and fat sellers (*ternieri*), revised in 1286 on the basis of earlier precedents, a *capitolare* specifies that its members were obliged to give 100 *libri* of cheese to the doge each Christmas.[93] Furthermore, the 1312 *promissione* of doge Giovanni Soranzo – based on those of Ranier Zeno (1253) and Lorenzo Tiepolo (1268) – states that the mercers (*merciai*) were obliged to contribute five *soldi*'s worth of unspecified dogal *regalie* and

[90] For the origins and development of the *Giovedì Grasso* ritual, see Crouzet-Pavan 1992, pp.934-935; Muir 1981, pp.160-162; Gramigna and Perissa 1981, p.47; Norwich 1977, p.126; Mutanelli 1841, pp.45-46.
[91] CAV, III, pp.21, 276; Bonfiglio Dosio 1997, p.589. The provision is also mentioned in the 1312 *promissione* of doge Giovanni Soranzo. See CAV, II, pp.lx-lxi and n.1.
[92] Norwich 1977, p.118.
[93] CAV, II, p.20.

the spice traders (*fardelli*) four *libri* of pepper.[94] The *promissioni* of Zeno and Tiepolo state, moreover, that the *pelliciai* had to contribute one pelt to the doge each year, an ordinance expanded in that of Soranzo (1312) to include several types of furs, *operis variorum*, including lambskins and those of woodland animals from the *terraferma*, and the glassmakers (*fioleri*) had to provide goblets for the doge's use.[95]

Although the obligation to provide such *regalie* appears to have been placed most heavily on the purveyors of luxury trades – none of which, of course, appear in the 'Trade Reliefs' – such "offerings" were highly symbolic of the relationship between arti and government. As Muir puts it, 'the gifts not only revealed the broad social base of devotion but also signified the "feudal" tie of the guilds to the doge.'[96] What is of prime interest for our purposes, in fact, is that such demonstrations of worker loyalty have been taken to inform the existence of the 'Trade Reliefs' themselves. Tigler, for example, effectively appears to regard the sculptures as the visual equivalent of the guild processions, citing as evidence Francesco Saccardo's sixteenth-century description of an annual ritual in which the city's workers and artisans offered candles at the basilica.[97] What this reiteration of the '*arti* argument' fails to represent, however, is that these demonstrations of loyalty to the doge and his government were not autonomously motivated by the guilds themselves. It could be countered, in fact, that the *regalie* were just as much forced obligations as the monetary loans exerted on other citizens in the civic structure; and to read such offerings as direct actions is equally as problematic as regarding the "Trade Reliefs' as anything but an indirect expression of the funding that trading activity had provided to procuratia and *opus*.

[94] ASV, Cod. 277 "*ex-Brera*" , c.13 B. Cited in CAV, II, pp.329-330.
[95] CAV II, p.174 n.3. See also CAV II pp.lxi-lxii. For *regalie* in later centuries, which tended to primarily consist of monetary contributions or candles, see Muir 1981, p.85.
[96] Ibid.
[97] Tigler 1993, p.163.

One historian who has nudged closer to a more appropriate interpretation, however, is Manno. He states that there may be some connection between the selection of trades in the sculptures and 'i relativi obblighi fiscali e di leva,' although he does not cite either the obligations themselves or his sources.[98] Yet Manno's point can be developed much further. Indeed there is evidence to suggest that the artisans and traders in the remainder of the 'Trade Reliefs' were directly linked to the concept of another sort of obligation: that of required service to the state.

Fasoli, for example, argues that the conceptual context for the custom was the same Lombard and Byzantine tradition that had initially given rise to the notion of *regalie*. She comments:

> Fin dal tempo più antico il doge aveva diritto a prestazioni d'opera da parte degli artigiani, controllati dai gastaldi ducali; le pin antiche promissioni ducali ci dicono che queste prestazioni andavano dall'offerta di cibarie e scarpe alla riparazione dei tetti, delle imbarcazioni al servizio del palazzo, delle botti della cantina ducale, al servizio di barba e capelli per i dependenti del Palazzo.[99]

Overall, in fact, the few surviving sources bear out the reading that Venice's artisans were bound to provide their expertise when required by doge and government. The first evidence dates to the tenth century, when the millers (*mugnai*) of the island of San Giorgio – owned in this period by the doge himself – had to provide guards for the Ducal Palace whenever it was demanded.[100] Yet arguably the most revealing document

[98] Manno 1997, p.15
[99] Fasoli 1973, p.288. Muir takes up Fasoli's point, stating that the artisans 'owed the doge certain well-defined gifts of goods or services: casks of wine, foodstuffs, shoes, gondola transport, and haircuts.' Muir 1981, p.254. n.10.
[100] CAV, II, pp.li-lii, xxvii; Bonfiglio Dosio 1997, p.585 and p.619 n.39; Favaro 1975, p.11 and n.1.

consists of an eleventh-century legal case that concerns the appeal of a smith, Giovanni Sagornino, against the obligation to provide work for the Ducal Palace, and it is worth citing the text in full:

Quadam die nos Iohannes Sagornino ferrarius insimul cum cunctis meis parentibus in unum convenimus ad tempore dompni Pieti Barbolani ducis, et requirebat nobis suoque gastaldio quod in curte ferrum laborare debuissemus; sed tamen omnibus modis contradiximus, nisi tantum quod laborare debeamus per nostras mansiones quicquid necessitatem fuisset omnique tempore ad predictum palacium quantum nobis deportasset carcerarius; unde nos illo tempore ita comprobavimus cum testibus, et iudicatum extitit nobis ut iurare debuissemus ad sancta Dei quattuor evangelia, sed in diebus predicti nostri senioris iam dictum sacramentum minime fecimus. Nunc autem nos venimus ante presentiam domni Dominici Flabiani gloriosissimi ducis, senioris nostri, cum ipse residebat in pallacio cum suis iudicibus et ibi adstante maxima pars suorum fidelium, et cepimus nos lamentare de virtute quod gastaldus fabri ferrarii nobis faciebat. Denique iudicaverunt et confirmaverunt ut secundum quod ad tempore prefati Petri Barbolani iurare debuimus, ita modo adimplere debuimusm [deberemus], quod ita fecimus. Sed piissimus gloriosus dux, senior noster, noticiam scriptionis exinde nobis fecit ut in curtis pallacii ferrum laborare minime debeamus neque sub iugo gastaldioni fabri permanere debeamus, nisi tantum in nostras mansiones laborare debeamus ferrum quantum carcerarius huius pallacii nobis deportant cum omni nostro precio et expendio ita quod ceteri fabri de illorum capitibus persolvunt; et liceat nobis cunctum ferrum laborare secundum quod ceteri fabri laborant.[101]

[101] Monticolo 1890, pp.175-176. See also CAV, II, pp.329-330.

This document offers us three valuable points for consideration. First, as Monticolo (who originally published the document) underlines, the introduction of obliged work appears to have substantially predated the formation of the guilds themselves; and since Sagornino's statement specifically directed his discontent against the *gastaldo*, this might indicate that the original capacity of this guild official was specifically developed from an original role of enforcing the state obligations, the *ordo palatii*.[102] Second is the idea that the system of artisan obligations existed to provide services for doge and state, yet there was no financial recompense for the workers concerned. The third point is that the custom tended to be documented only when it was disputed. This might indicate that when the guild structure came into full definition, the practice was so thoroughly inculcated within the artisan framework as to be taken as an absolute given.

Certainly the evidence provided by the thirteenth-century statutes of the *arti* suggests that the idea of state service was by this stage a deeply rooted *consuetudine*. Let us look once more at the case of the smiths. In their *capitolari* of 1271, the relevant clause states: '*In primis igitur statuimus quod tota ars fabrorum facere teneatur domino duci et pallacio integre omnes fabricationes pertinentie sue artis.*'[103] The lineaments of the process of obligated work are thus similar to those of two centuries before. The guild members were bound to work on the upkeep of the Ducal Palace on demand; in return, the doge undertook to provide materials and victuals, but no financial remuneration. The *fabbri* were by no means alone in this requirement. As Fasoli underlines in the citation quoted above, a similar situation existed for the coopers (*bottai / botteri*) and the barrel hoop-makers (*cerchai*); and it is worth expanding the point to mention their 1271 statutes, which stipulated that they were obligated to provide barrels or their

[102] CAV, II, pp.329-330. Favaro cautions, though, that the document should not be interpreted as early evidence for the existence of formal guilds, underlining that the "we" - "*nos*" - could instead refer to a family of artisans. Favaro 1975, p.11.
[103] CAV, II, pp.329-330. See also Ibid, pp.lxi-lxii; Monticolo 1890, pp.175-176; Bonfiglio Dosio 1997, p.589.

monetary equivalent of 30 *soldi* every August '*pro opere sive servicio*', with their obedience being required '*sine murmuratione.*'[104]

It is significant, however, that the work proffered to the state could also consist of services in kind. The 1270 statutes of the barbers specifies that one capable guild member was to be made available '*pro servitiis palatii*' on request;[105] and as well as reiterating the obligation that the coopers provide barrels for use at the Ducal Palace, the *promissioni* of doges Giacomo Tiepolo (1229), Ranier Zeno (1253) and Giovanni Soranzo (1312) stipulated that the cobblers had to provide sixty pairs of shoes to the doge, a measure also included within that guild's statutes of 1271.[106] These offerings, however, went beyond the definition of the occasional if regular ritual *regalie* required from the luxury trades. Instead the barbers and the cobblers had to present their labour whenever it was demanded of them, and thus their "offerings" constituted constant and symbolic reminders of the submission of the workers to the state framework.

Arguably the most significant area of obliged work, however was that relating to shipbuilding at the arsenal. The relevant clause in the statutes of the shipwrights (*marangoni da nave / carpentieri da nave / falegnami da nave*), also issued in 1271, stipulates that the guildsmen had to work on the ships of the commune for a minimum of fifteen days per year:

> *Item, ordinamus quod si aliquis marangonus domorum laborare vellet de supradicta arte navium, quod laborare possit de ea per dies quindecim sine sacramento huius artis.et si plus laborare vellet de dicta arte, nullo modo aliquis secum amplius ad laborandum conducere debeat vel recipere audeat, nisi prius*

[104] Bonfiglio Dosio 1997, p.589. See also CAV, II, pp.lxi-lxii.
[105] CAV, II, p.174 n.3.
[106] Fasoli 1973, p.288. The requirement for the *calzolai* was later replaced by a monetary equivalent of five *soldi* per guild member. Bonfiglio Dosio 1997, p.587.

iuramentum huius artis fecerit, et iuramento facto laboret in dicta arte ad suam voluntatem, solvendo annuatim dicte arti soldos denariorum sex; salvo quod si per dominum ducem et eius consilium preceptum fuerit ut quilibet marangonus domorum ire debeat ad laborandum naves seu navigia comunis, tunc ad suprascriptum iuramentum seu dacium non teneatur, licet steterit et laboraverit ultra dies quindecim.[107]

This requirement, which also appears in another set of *capitolari* issued in 1271, those of the carpenters (*magistrorum domorum / marangoni da casa / falegnami*), was a rare instance of collaboration between the separate guilds being actively promoted by the state.[108] Notably, in fact, the *marangoni da nave* and the caulkers (*calafati*), whose statutes date to the same year, did not have to swear the oath of loyalty to another related *arte* if such a working enterprise lasted less than fifteen days; this is quite implicitly the period within which they worked on the state fleet; and a similar ruling also applied to the *marangoni domorum* and the sawyers (*segadori*), whose statutes were granted in 1262.[109]

In contrast to the case of the smiths, however, the guildsmen required to work at the arsenal could sometimes, if not always, expect financial payment for their services. On one hand, the *marangoni domorum* had to provide fifteen artisans for unpaid work on demand by doge and government, and each *marangoni da nave*, *calafato* and *segadore* had to give his services free of charge for three days annually.[110] Those *segadori* who worked for the state on a more extended basis, on the other hand, were paid on daily

[107] CAV, II, p.208. See also Concina 1984, p.17 and p.24 n.41.
[108] For the clause in the statutes of the *falegnami*, see CAV, II, p.208 and n.3; Monticolo 1892, pp.14-15. For the cross-over between the activities of the *marangoni da nave* and the *marangoni domorum*, see Concina 1984, p.17.
[109] CAV, II, p.208. See also Concina 1984, p.24 n.41; Luzzatto 1961, p.66.
[110] CAV, II, pp.lxi-lxii.

basis, in contrast to the usual wage calculated on the basis of the number of finished pieces of work.[111]

Overall, whether the workers were remunerated or not, the obligation of state service bound them firmly to the notion of the collective good. It was also a material consideration. As Schulz reports, in 1265 a deliberation of the Great Council ordered that a substantial quantity of seasoned timber had to be constantly available for the construction of communal ships – '*pro laborerio galearim*' – and another decree in 1276 stipulated that four galleys and two smaller ships had to be available for state use at all times.[112] It could also be argued, though, that the paradigm of obliged work within the construction industries might not have only applied to shipbuilding. While there is no surviving documentation to support the case, the domestic builders (*mureri*) and carpenters (*maragoni domorum*) could well have been directly involved with the duecento building campaign at the basilica, including the expansion and vaulting of the atrium, the revetment of the façades and the construction of the loggia over the main portal; and as Fiocco points out, the refashioning of the basilica's cupolas would have specifically fallen into their sphere of activity.[113] Would this, then, suggest yet another connection to the subjects of the 'Trade Reliefs'?

While this last point can only be speculative, any consideration of the obliged worker-state relationship would not be complete without considering its potential tensions. In the case of shipbuilding, the requirement to work for little or no stipend on communal production – and this for a relatively extensive period – would have forced the artisans to abandon their usual and more lucrative activities, especially since on a normal basis

[111] '*Preterea, non segabo vel segari faciam aliquod lignamem albedi, çapani seu de laresso alicui homini per pactum ad diem nisi tantum illis hominibus qui requisierint laborare in servitio comunis Veneciarum.*' Ibid, p.4.
[112] *Liber Officiorum* XXI, iii. Schulz 1991, pp.428-430. See also Concina 1984, pp.14, 24 n.30, 31.
[113] Fiocco 1974, pp.167-168. For the raising of the cupolas in the 1260s, see also Polacco 1994, p.61 and discussion in Chapter Two.

they were paid according to their rate of production; and the situation might also have been faced by those shipbuilders working in private boatyards, for as Concina points out, thirteenth-century documents suggest that the *squeri* were called upon to boost the arsenal's capabilities in times of particular need.[114] Certainly the state itself appeared to recognise that the obligations could be perceived by the guilds as a threat to their livelihood. In his *promissione* of 1229, Giacomo Tiepolo undertook to not increase them beyond their traditional limits: '*nihil amplius servitii inquirere.*'[115] That this promise was not fulfilled, though, is evidenced by the subsequent increase in the volume and extent of the constraints placed on the arsenal workers, for instance, and in fact Luzzatto, for one, suggests that the artisans sought to avoid the provisions quite actively.[116]

It might, in fact, be far from coincidental that with the exception of those of the statutes of the *segadori*, the *capitolari* cited above were all the product of the intensive issue of statutes in the early 1270s. At a time of perceived unrest, it seems likely that the obligations to provide labour to the state were being reiterated in stronger terms, not created *de novo*. In fact, Fasoli posits that the requirements appear to have increased commensurably with the acceleration in the formation of guilds in the later thirteenth century.[117] The system of obliged labour, therefore, could be interpreted as another symbolic and functional example of the rigorous hold the state applied to the city's artisan workers.

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[114] Concina 1984, p.13. For documentary citations of the practice, see Ibid, p.24 n.26.
[115] See Romanin 1973, p.216; Bonfiglio Dosio 1997, p.589. Bonfiglio Dosio follows Cracco's reading of Jacopo Tiepolo observing a 'politica filo-popolare.' Ibid, p.620 n.49. For the necessary revision of this argument, see discussion in Chapter Three. For the full content of Tiepolo's *promissione*, see ASV, *Secreta Collegio, Liber promissionum*, reg. 1; edited in Musatti 1888, pp.7-13.
[116] Luzzatto 1961, p.66. Unfortunately, here Luzzatto does not cite his sources.
[117] For this argument, see also Fasoli 1973, p.288.

Overall, though, it would be a mistake to read the situation as evidence of the 'Anti-Myth' of an oppressed workforce. Just like the statutes, it brought with it a framework of mutual benefits: the guilds and the government entered into a contract, as it were, of reciprocal honour and support.[118] In the case of the arsenal workers, their obliged contributions to state ship-construction appear to have been balanced not only by the legal rights encoded in their statutes but also by a prominent role in civic ceremonial. A squad of *arsenalotti* carried each newly-elected doge in a litter during the celebratory processions, and also operated as an honorary guard at the Ducal Palace during the *interregnum* between the death of one doge and the election of another.[119] One cannot imagine that this ritual participation was viewed as a penance – unless, of course, it brought an increased financial burden. Instead it sits comfortably with the notion of status association presented by Mackenney, with the workers drawn into the most prestigious public displays of the Venetian body politic.

Overall, then, the notion of obliged work fits into the ideal of a balanced civic framework. Loyalty was a two-way street, due not only from the artisans and traders to the state but from the government to its workers. The practice of presenting *regalie* and service to the state operated as a system of integration, not of alienation; and the symbolic nature of the exercise would not have been lost on those that it directly involved. The fact that the 'Trade Reliefs' depicted some of the key guilds subject to the system of obliged labour – the shipbuilders, the barbers, the coopers and the cobblers – would have served as a mimetic reminder of the value of these urban labours. What is more, the selection of activities for the sculptures would have been designed to acknowledge not only those lines of work that had contributed to the funding of the *opus* but also those that were exemplary for the construction and devolving of a stable and viable worker framework.

[118] For this concept, see also CAV, II, pp.l-li; Muir 1981, p.255.
[119] Muir 1981, pp.269, 276, 285. See also Brown 1996, p.164.

With these constructs in mind, let us draw some preliminary conclusions. The *arti* depicted within the 'Trade Reliefs' and the Piazzetta sculptures did in fact contribute towards their financing; for in their role as landlords of the *Insula Sancti Marci*, the procurators of San Marco collected rents and tithes from the traders and artisans who operated under their jurisdiction, monies that would have been then channelled into the very functional business of running the *opus* as a state concern. What is more, the other activities shown in the 'Trade Reliefs' were also linked to this notion of the paradigmatic civic structure, for the images could be said to implicitly acknowledge the contribution the smiths, the coopers, the barbers and dentists, the cobblers and especially those trades concerning ship-construction in the arsenal made to the symbolic fabric of Venice's civic framework by means of their obliged labours for the good of the state and the civic collective. But if these factors shed substantial light on the symbolic meaning behind the selection of activities in the 'Trade Reliefs' and Piazzetta column bases, they also connect with what we know about the mechanics of patronage in the *Insula*. If it is unlikely that the guilds themselves commissioned the two cycles of sculptures, it is entirely logical, and indeed inevitable, that our attention must turn back to the state itself, and the organ that here represented it: the procurators of San Marco.

Indirect Donation and the 'Trade Reliefs'

In the first part of the discussion in this chapter, it was underlined above all how the procuratia devolved patronage at the *opus* on a very functional level. The surviving documentation, in fact, gives us a clear sense of the continuities in its role, demonstrating that its incumbency extended to organising the embellishment of the Piazza, Piazzetta and the Ducal Palace as well as the basilica itself. In these terms, the conclusion is inescapable that the procurators themselves were responsible for

implementing the structural and iconographical choices that underpinned the programming of such work, not least the external decoration campaign at the state's own church of San Marco.

Indeed even some of the art historians who so thoroughly promote the idea of direct guild patronage at the main portal place the procurators firmly at the helm of all programming at the basilica. Muraro, for instance, cites their role in the planning of the twelfth century mosaic decoration in the interior of the basilica;[120] and in the context of his discussion of the 'Labours of the Months' of the second archivolt, Dorigo cites the iconographic choices as within the remit 'della committenza, i procuratori cioè di San Marco.'[121] Why, then, does the '*arti* argument' for the patronage of the Trade Reliefs, and by extension for that of the Piazzetta columns, so thoroughly fail to consider what *is* known about the importance of the procurators at the *opus*?

The evidence strongly suggests, in fact, that since the procurators generated the financial means of developing the *Insula Sancti Marci* as Venice's political and civic forum, they also have a direct impact on is its image-making. Yet in the absence of clear and direct documentation, it is all but impossible to reconstruct any hypothetical relationship between this thematic planning and individuals who held the title of the procurator at the time the main portal and the Piazzetta socle sculptures were executed. As Rando rightly comments:

> Malgrado la sterminata produzione bibliografica relativa a S.Marco da parte di archeologi, storici dell'arte e dell'architettura, resta ancora da ricostruire il ruolo dei singoli procuratori e dei *proti* all'interno dei cosiddetti "processi creativi", cioè nel programma e nelle soluzioni artistiche relative all'iconografia delle

[120] Muraro 1975, p.63.
[121] Dorigo 1988, p.8.

> decorazioni musive e plastiche della basilica, nelle procedure decisionali, amministrative ed esecutive che influenzarono la realizzazione dell'intero progetto marciano.[122]

In the case of the main portal, such a problem is compounded by an aspect to which we have already alluded: it is unclear to establish whether the decision to use the subject matter of urban work at the main portal was made from the project's inception, or was instead the product of a process of some conceptual fluidity.

Fulvio Zuliani, however, suggests that the latter reading probably applied to the overall lineaments of works at the main portal. He states:

> .... Il programma del portale maggiore non è stato ideato probabilmente in tutti i suoi aspetti fin dall'inizio dell'impresa, ma è il prodotto di successive integrazioni.[123]

To this valuable observation one can add some modulated readings. First, of course, we have the possibility that the 'Trade Reliefs' – and here I will concentrate initially on the case of the basilica – were planned from the outset. Though very little information survives as to the role of individual procurators in the 1220s and 1230s, when we turn to the policies of the doges of the time, a viable political and conceptual framework emerges within which the patronage of the 'Trade Reliefs' fits in to the model of a state commission, especially in relation to the administration of Giacomo Tiepolo.

[122] Rando 1996, p.115.
[123] Zuliani 1994, p.100.

As we saw in Chapter Three, like that of his predecessor Pietro Ziani, Tiepolo's policies were heavily predicated on the implementation of norms to stabilise relations between the established patrician families, the *grandi*, and the *nuovi* or *popolari*, those merchants who had more recently scaled the political ladder. In 1242, the revision of the civic statutes had been intended to frame the oligarchic model as a paradigm of fair government; and a large proportion of the *capitolari* within the corpus affected the governing of the selling and transferral of real estate in a manner that protected the rights of widows, orphans and ecclesiastic institutions. In fact it is notable that the procuratia itself was placed at the helm of the decision-making involved in such a process, with the earliest indication that the *commissarie* deposited there could be reinvested.[124]

When one considers these policies within the frame of the state-*opus* dynamic, it is potentially significant that one of doge Tiepolo's co-signatories of the revised *statuti civili* was one of the two incumbent procurators of San Marco, Tomaso Centranigo.[125] Since the corpus placed such great emphasis on a strict governmental hold on the affairs of the citizenry within the overall frame of civic justice and given Centranigo's role in both the statute-issue process and the *opus* of San Marco, could the procurator have directly suggested a visual example of the theme of a state-led collective, and this at a time that the motivations that underpinned the formalisation of civil *lex* were filtering down to the encoding of the guilds' own statutes?

The possible role of Centranigo in the portal project can only remain speculation; and in fact in my research in the state archive I found very little information about his historical import and also – for he was one of two procurators at the time – that of his

[124] Mueller 1971, pp.133, 155-156, 220.
[125] See Molin, *Storia delli Procuratori*; BM, Ms.It.Cl.VII n.1564, 2v.

co-incumbent Piero Dandolo.[126] If, however, Zuliani is correct in his theory that the programming of the main portal may have been progressively modulated throughout its execution, the implications of the relationship between *opus* and state are still more potent.

As I suggested in Chapter Two, in fact, it appears likely that both the 'Trade Reliefs' and the Piazzetta column bases – works that would also have been implemented by the procurators – were a product of Ranier Zeno's dogado. Here, I would strongly suggest, ne can consider the extent to which the operation of the *opus* and procuratia might have been impacted by the strong political dynamic we outlined in Chapter Three, that between Zeno's administration and the guilds.

In this light, it may not be insignificant that before he attained the position of doge, Zeno had held various posts as *podestà* in the *terraferma*, including that at Piacenza in the years 1236 to 1237, a time when tensions with Frederick II were at their height.[127] Was he a first-hand witness of another cycle of images of urban work: the guild *formelle* of the town's Cathedral? In this sense, the leitmotif of manual labour could have been modelled on the direct artisan commissions at Piacenza, only to be used at San Marco and in the Piazzetta in the officialised frame of state patronage. Given Zeno's apparently active role in the civic works of the 1250s and 1260s, the theory that his influence was strongly felt at the *opus* is not beyond the bounds of reason. What is more, even if the overall theme of urban work was planned from the outset of the main portal project several decades before, one cannot discount the idea that the considerations that he may have utilised were already in existence.

[126] For the register of names, see Ibid.
[127] For Zeno at Piacenza, see Cracco 1987, p.79; Da Mosto 1983, p.87. For an outline of the conflict with Frederick II, see Ortalli 1998-1999, pp.432-441.

In the figures of the procurators, then, we might find a resolution for the question of patronage at the basilica as a whole. In the relative dearth of direct sources and given the fundamental uncertainty about whether the 'Trade Reliefs' were an initial or a subsequent inclusion in the main portal project – although I have suggested that at least the selection of subjects may have been a progressive consideration – all that can be firmly argued is a state-led programme of works within the *Insula* based firmly on political considerations, a factor that would be pertinent whether the 'Trade Reliefs' were planned within the reigns of Giacomo Tiepolo, Marino Morosini or Ranier Zeno. What can be strongly proposed, however, is that the choice to include specific trading and artisan activities in the 'Trade Reliefs' and Piazzetta column bases was informed by a political model of collective allegiance, and one moreover that was directly threatened, and thus even more strongly imposed, in the later years of Ranier Zeno's dogado and the early years of that of his successor Lorenzo Tiepolo.

Above all, the continuities in the role of the procurators as rent-collectors and state enforcers within the *Insula*, as well as the concept of obliged service that underpinned the realities of the thirteenth-century guilds, argues for a durable framework for the production of the Trade Reliefs and Piazzetta sculptures: that of the *Insula Sanct Marci* representing the visual expression of 'the city's civic consciousness.'[128] This, moreover, ultimately overrides the irresolvable problem of when the decision to use the subject matter of was actually made. The theme of artisans and tradesmen was not only of particular currency in the political context of the time; its very existence was also underpinned by the enduring funding mechanisms that informed the *opus* at San Marco as a state concern.

[128] Jacoff 1993, p.85.

Conclusions

In conclusion, it is entirely tenable to regard the procuratia of San Marco as a supremely political organism, and the activities of its officials as a politic reflection of the state framework within both they and the subjects of the 'Trade Reliefs' and Piazzetta column bases were enclosed. Venice's traders and artisans were bound to the ideal of the civic collective through the dual requirements of duty and loyalty, and this in the form of both the work and *regalie* some were obliged to offer and the income that the labours of others directly provided for the constant concern of funding the *opus*.

This rationale goes a considerable way to reframe the bounds of the '*arti* argument.' The thirteenth-century guilds were *not* the direct patrons of the reliefs in that they did not have an active role in the decision to use the theme of these trades; they may, however, have been very aware of the honour done to them in the placing of their images of stone. While the sculptures do not constitute a self-reflexive mirror of the guilds themselves, they do function as the visual encapsulation of the state-led imperatives underpinning the civic collective; and the images also acknowledge the ideals and realities that ensured its consolidation and perpetuation. The conceptual frame within which both cycles can be placed will be the focus of the following chapter.

Chapter Five

The Iconography of Everyday Life within the Thirteenth-Century Civic Context: The Self-Definition of the Venetian State

Introduction: The State as Work of Art

As Gina Fasoli comments, 'se mai è esistito uno stato che meritasse il nome di opera d'arte, è lo stato veneziano.'[1] Certainly the analogy is apt; and thus far in this study, I have examined the probable patronage and context of the 'Trade Reliefs' and Piazzetta column bases in order to frame them as paradigmatic examples of this internalised image making. The *arti* may not have been in the position to autonomously commission their images at the basilica or at the Piazzetta; yet the procurators of San Marco, whom I have proposed to be the patrons of the two cycles on behalf of the state, clearly thought it politic to integrate the trade guilds within the *Insula Sancti Marci* in a manner that acknowledged both their economic contribution to its refashioning and the intrinsically feudal ties that subjugated them to the notion of a government-led collective. This, of course, goes well beyond the traditional interpretation of the sculptures, that of a purely ecclesiastical rehabilitation of the value of manual work; above all, it constituted a governmental recognition of the impact of the city's workforce on the fabric, both physical and symbolic, of civic life.

The 'Trade Reliefs' and Piazzetta column bases represent, however, just one element within the extensive civic works that took place in the *Insula Sancti Marci* in the course of the duecento. Here, of course, the external decoration campaign at

[1] Fasoli 1973, p.261.

San Marco must be regarded as a global undertaking, and one, moreover, that should be examined hand-in-hand with the paving of the Piazza area and the reforming of the Piazzetta, both of which, as I have suggested, can be in all likelihood dated to the years of Ranier Zeno's dogado. With this in mind, the aim of this fifth and final chapter is to frame these works as a conceptual unicum, and one that was underscored by a set of essentially political pretensions and imperatives.

Firstly, I will argue that the case of the basilica itself is particularly illuminating. The thirteenth-century decoration campaign at San Marco may have been eclectic in its overall effect, but its programming appears to have been motivated by specific tenets: the reinforcing of the hagiography of its patron St. Mark the Evangelist and the proclamation of a triumphalist message in the light of Venice's perceived hegemony over Constantinople. Secondly, I will propose that the works of improvement carried out in the Piazza and Piazzetta can be framed as the tangible crystallisation of the Republic's pretensions. Thirdly, I will return to the examination of the 'Trade Reliefs' and Piazzetta column bases to identify visual factors that place them within this political context. Overall, what makes these works such representative examples of the state's motivations and ambitions?

Visual Politics at San Marco

Given its role as Venice's religious and civic palladium, the notion that San Marco represents a key piece of visual policy-making should not, in effect, be startling. The basilica is arguably the defining crystallisation of the Republic's self-definition, and the process of its external embellishment in the course of the duecento was one that entailed, as Demus puts it, that 'every detail of [its] decoration....could, and did, take on a political aspect.'[2]

[2] Demus 1960, p.54

In Marcian studies, however, it is notable that the idea of a politically informed symbolism at the basilica has mostly been discussed in reference to the hagiographical imagery of St. Mark, in itself the product of a long process of successive assimilations.[3] Its basis – the ninth-century theft of the Evangelist's relics from Alexandria – was not only an act that gave rise to the building of the first incarnation of the basilica but a necessary step in Venice's appropriation of apostolic status. In the following three centuries, moreover, the Republic's struggle with Aquileia to assert primacy over the Patriarchate of Grado underscored the creation of works at San Marco whose iconography represents a subtle inversion of usual norms. In the twelfth-century Pantocrator mosaic in the main apse, for example, Christ is flanked not by Saints Peter and Paul but Peter and Mark, to whom he hands the book of the gospel; and in the chapel of San Clemente, where the doge himself had his seat, we find an image of the sacred theft, the *translatio*, in arguably the most political location within the basilica.[4]

If the politicising of Venice's apostolic history had reached an initial impetus in the twelfth century, it reached its apex in the thirteenth. The Republic's claim to Grado over that of Aquileia was confirmed by Pope Innocent III in 1204;[5] and in the same year the sack of Constantinople added fuel not only to Venice's accumulation of wealth and territorial possessions but also to the notion that such successes were her inalienable right. As such, the promotion of sacred supremacy by way of the cult of the Evangelist found its place at the heart of the decoration programme at the basilica that held his relics.

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[3] For an overview of Marcian hagiography, see Dale 1994; Demus 1994, pp.2-3; Lieberman 1991, p.120; Muir 1981, pp.78-84.
[4] For a detailed analysis of the mosaics of the Pantocrator, the chapel of San Clemente and the accompanying narratives in the chapel of San Pietro, see Dale 1994, pp.62-63, 67-71, 75-76; Demus 'mosaics,' pp.28-36.
[5] Rando 1996 pp.78-79; Dale 1994, p.75.

This campaign – for its politicisation renders it as such – appears to have reached a height under doge Ranier Zeno. As we saw in Chapter Two, it was in his dogado that two large mosaics were inserted into the south transept depicting the *apparitio* **(fig.93)**, an episode that Zeno himself probably promoted as an *ad novo* inclusion within the Evangelist's hagiographical canon.[6] Here what is most notable, however, is that the anachronistic representation of Zeno himself within a narrative that refers to an event of almost two centuries before sublimates a very contemporary apostolic claim.[7] Pincus, in fact, suggests that the appearance of the *apparitio* imagery within the basilica at this particular time – in all likelihood the late 1250s or early 1260s – should be read not only as a supporting factor in Zeno's overall drive to promote Venice's ecclesiastical importance (a factor, it will be remembered, informing his missive of 1265 to the papal curia) but also as a deliberate step to "prove", as it were, the Republic's possession of St. Mark's relics, at a time that a rival claim had been presented by the monastery at Reichenau.[8]

It is also crucial to bear in mind that it appears to have been Zeno who was doge at the time that the Marcian hagiographical cycle received its fullest exposition in the form of the mosaics of the west façade. Here the original narrative of the transportation of St. Mark's relics from Alexandria to Venice was expanded from seven episodes to thirteen, including the crucial inclusion of the *praedestinatio*, the appearance of an angel to the Evangelist to announce that his body would later rest in the lagoon.[9] In fact the manner of "reading" the mosaics would have had its own

[6] For the historiography of the *apparitio*, see Dale 1994, pp.71-73, 85-86; Brown 1991, p.519; Norwich 1977, p.98; Tramontin 1971, pp.54-57; Demus 1960, pp.9-14.
[7] Dale 1994, p.53; Muraro 1975, p.60, 63; Demus 1984, II, p.30.
[8] Pincus 1984, pp.43-44; also Demus 1960, pp.14, 18. For the document of 1265, see discussion in Chapter Two.
[9] For the mosaics of the west façade, see especially Dale 1994, pp.88-93; Demus 1988, pp.183-187. For an outline of the development of the *praedestinatio* myth, whose first

political symbolism. The story of the *translatio* started at the Porta Da Mar – also the end point of the ceremonial axis that led from the sea to the Piazzetta, to San Marco and the Piazza - and finished at the *collocatio* of the Porta Sant'Alipio, where once more Ranier Zeno is depicted as participant in and earthly endorser of St. Mark's legend.[10]

In his *Éstoires*, in fact, Martino Da Canal cites the mosaic cycle as the visible confirmation of the validity of the Marcian legend and thus Venice's apostolic identity:

> *Et se aucun vodra savoir la verité tot ensi con je le vos ai conté, veigne veoir la bele yglise de monsignor saint Marc en Venise et regarde devant la bele yglise, que est escrit tote ceste estoire tot enci con je vos ai contee...*[11]

The paradigm certainly appears apt. As Patricia Fortini Brown puts it, the visual statements 'were more powerful than texts in creating a civic identity of a reassuring historical density, for they were unmediated testimony: unprovable, thus unchallengeable.'[12] What one could argue, though, is that the *Éstoires* were in themselves a reinforcement of the imaged "writing" constituted by the mosaics of the west façade. Firstly, as Fasoli suggests, Martino's commissioning patron was in all likelihood Ranier Zeno himself, and in fact Da Canal was probably an employee

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textual version was in Martino Da Canal's *Éstoires*, see Rizzi 2001, p.17; Brown 1991, p.519; Pincus 1984, p.50.

[10] For this argument and the politicised imagery of the south façade, see particularly Dale 1994, p.90; Jacoff 1993, pp.43-45; Pincus 1984, p.50; Salvadori 1986, p.39; Muraro 1985, p.29; Muir 1981; Muraro 1975, pp.62-63. For the idea of a '*via sacra*,' see Schlink 1985, p.33; Muraro 1981, p.8. For the probability that the doge in the Porta Sant'Alipio lunette can be identified as Ranier Zeno, not Lorenzo Tiepolo, see discussion in Chapter Two.

[11] Da Canal 1972, pp.20, 22.

[12] Brown 1996, p.29.

of the dogal curia, implying that his work had 'un ben preciso obiettivo politico.'[13] His narration was thus one framed in terms of how the Venetian state regarded itself – or rather, how it wanted to be regarded from both within and without the maritime republic. Secondly, the *praedestinatio*, a lynchpin of the Marcian cycle, made its first appearance in textual form within the *Éstoires*.[14] In this sense, the works Zeno's administration produced, the mosaics chief amongst them, strengthens the case for the overt manufacture of a gloss of a visual, and visible, historicity, a drive that became most powerful at a time that the political imperatives that informed it were in the process of receiving their final and enduring consolidation.

The notion of an idealised and politicised heritage at San Marco was by no means limited to the thirteenth-century decoration campaign, however. Frasson and Dorigo convincingly propose, for instance, that its structural form – an extended Greek cross with a series of domes – the third and final incarnation of the basilica, undertaken in the late eleventh century under doge Domenico Contarini, was deliberately intended to emulate Imperial and apostolic precedents such as the church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, the Palatine chapel at Aachen and the martyrium of St. Mark at Alexandria.[15] Yet the model that emerges time and again in scholarship – and indeed within the Venetian chronicle tradition itself – is that represented by the Apostoleion, the church of the Holy Apostles in Constantinople, where important relics of the martyrs were enshrined.[16] Its use as San Marco's template allied Venice's apostolic claims with its importance as the repository for priceless relics, including those miraculously saved from the flames in the Treasury fire of 1231; and crucially, the visual nod to such an important Byzantine shrine

[13] Fasoli 1961, p.51. See also Ibid, p.59; Fasoli 1958, p.470.
[14] For the *praedestinatio* in the *Éstoires*, see discussion above.
[15] See, for instance, Dale 1994, p.54; Dorigo 1992, pp.63-69; Frasson 1992, pp.63-91.
[16] See Demus 1960, pp.65-7, 69; Zuliani 1994, p.21; Polacco 1994 p.62. For the chronicles, Cecchetti 1886, p.209.

presented the Republic as an equally important claimant to Constantinople's status as the centre of the Christian Roman Empire.[17]

Indeed the theory of the deliberate reiteration of Roman and early Christian models at San Marco has gained such scholarly momentum that it has gained its own definition: that of '*renovatio imperii romani*.'[18] For both Demus and Brown, this *renovatio* was essentially a proto-renaissance driven by the desire to blend authentic early Christian works with contemporary sculptures that deliberately sought to present a late antique heritage. For them the most representative examples of this "fakery", if one can define it so strongly, consists of the monumental relief slab of St. George on the west façade, which was carved as a pendant to the early Christian representation of St. Demetrius **(figs.83a,b)**; here the blend between authentic and fictive is so seamless that it has only relatively recently been determined which is the "copy" and which the original.[19] Here it is interesting that Muir, another proponent of the *renovatio* theory, directly ascribes the commissioning of these works to the procurators of San Marco.[20] This would reinforce the overall argument presented in this study: that the politicising of imagery was not only a part of the stylistic agenda at San Marco but was also integral to how patronage was devolved.

This concept of a deliberate recreation of a fictive historicity could be said to be equally discernable in the stylistic approach of the sculptures of the main portal. As we saw in Chapter Two, the reliefs of the second archivolt, the 'Labours of the Months' and the 'Virtues and Beatitudes,' echo the classicising modes of the Antelamesque and the Île-de-France; and this is even more pronounced in the

[17] Pincus 1984, p.46.
[18] For *renovatio* in general, see Brown 1996, especially pp.15-19; and Demus 1960. For Venice's apostolic pretensions, see also Loechel 1996, p.484.
[19] Demus 1995, p.15; Demus 1960, pp.126-35; Brown 1991, pp.516-517. See also Dorigo 1990, pp.151, 153-155.
[20] Muir 1981, p.96.

'Trade Reliefs' of the third archivolt **(figs.22-37)**. Their figures, frozen in attitudes of heroic effort and pose, and the obvious classicising of their faces, limbs and hair curls, could be said to evoke antique sarcophagi reliefs; and as we saw in Chapter Two, the existence of a considerable body of such remains at Aquileia suggests that similar antique reliefs may have been known by the workshop at the main portal.[21] What is certain, though, is that the formal approach of the Trade Reliefs fits into the mores underlying *renovatio* as a whole: to present the Republic's visual culture as the result of an uninterrupted chronological and conceptual continuum from Roman antiquity, a 'reality' as idealised as it is peculiarly Venetian.

The idea that the thirteenth-century decoration campaign at San Marco was a politicised programme, though, is most potent when we regard the use of *spolia* and new classicising works as a thematic and structural whole; and this line of argument is particularly pertinent to the centrepiece of the decoration of the west façade, the Quadriga. As we also saw in Chapter Two, Jacoff proposes that the four bronze horses were intended to evoke the four Evangelists, the 'Quadriga of the Lord,' a metaphor that would have originally been more visually immediate, since in the thirteenth century five relief slabs showing Christ and the Evangelists were positioned in a row above the loggia.[22] For Jacoff, the transformation of the idea into physical form at the basilica would have reinforced the idea of the Republic possessing apostolic importance to equal that of Constantinople and Rome itself.

Jacoff's argument is convincing, for Venice was certainly no stranger to ecclesiastical self-promotion. Overall, though, for our purposes his line of thinking

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[21] See also discussion in Chapter Two. For examples of such antique and late antique tomb relief slabs at Aquileia, including a few showing artisan tools, see Šebesta 1996, pp.128, 141, 199.

[22] The reliefs were subsequently moved to their present location on the Porta dei Fiori. Jacoff 1993, pp.21-33. See also Jacoff 1993, pp.35-41 and discussion in Chapter Two. For St. Peter Damian and Venice, see also Chambers 1970, p.16.

may be less significant that another proposed by Deimer, Tigler and Perocco: that the Quadriga was intended to crown a structure composed of the main portal and the loggia, an assemblage that deliberately evoked a triumphal arch of the type utilised in the early Christian period in Rome itself and in Constantinople.[23] In fact this theory merits further development. Firstly, the thirteenth-century embellishment of the exterior of San Marco could indeed be interpreted as a visual declaration of its role in the Latin administration of the Greek east. The sack of Constantinople may have given the financial and political impetus to the embellishment of San Marco, but from the outset the intrinsic nature of a supremely violent act against a Christian city raised considerable polemic in the west.[24] In these terms, the insertion of a triumphal arch into the west façade of the basilica, as well as the use of the most prominent item of *spolia* taken as part of the Venetian booty, may have provided a sort of defensive vindication of a supremacist action of the first order.

Secondly, the idea of a triumphalist statement can be applied to what Brown rightly defines as the 'aggregation of spoils' used at the basilica.[25] The pillars of Acri, which were positioned by the south façade at some point in the 1250s, may have actually been brought from Constantinople, but for the Venetians themselves they long stood for a symbol of victory over Genoa, Venice's main rival in trading control of the Aegean.[26] What is more, the *pietra del bando*, a freestanding pedestal placed by the southwest corner of the basilica, was in itself part of the loot from the Genoese war of 1258.[27] The fact that here its function reprised its original use, that of the reading of decrees, could only have emphasised the notion of political continuity within the victorious Venetian context.

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[23] Diemer 1996 p.966; Tigler 1993, p.149; Perocco 1979, p.56; Perry 1979, pp.28, 104; Demus 1960, p.27.
[24] For this concept, see also Brown 1984, p.266.
[25] Brown 1991, p.522.
[26] For these ideas, see also Pincus 1984, pp.48, 56 n.57; Brown '991, p.522 and n.56. For the Venetians' victory over the Genoese at Acri, see Jacoby 1997, p.277.
[27] For the *Pietra del bando*, see Brown 1991, p.522 and n.56; Jacoff 1993, p.18.

Thirdly, the probability that these insertions took place during Ranier Zeno's administration certainly tallies with the theory of civic self-promotion at a time of political uncertainty. As Pincus points out, it cannot be coincidental that Zeno's ardent promotion of the hagiography of St. Mark, as well as the survival of the Treasury's most important relics in the fire of 1231, occurred at a time that Venice's hold in the Latin East was placed under threat, not only by the Paleologan retaking of Constantinople in 1261 but also by Venice's ongoing conflict with Genoa.[28] And the tensions were not only external; as we saw in Chapter Three, these same years were stamped by unrest within Venice itself, the result, it seems, of the costs of war and scarce food supplies being most keenly felt by the populace itself. The triumphalist symbolism used at San Marco, it seems, may have been carefully calculated for this audience: the members of the civic collective, workers and patricians alike, who had seen valuable finances being channelled into an expensive and ambitious building campaign.

In itself, could this theory of a triumphalist statement be applied to the sculptures of the main portal? The three arches would function as the opening, as it were, of the symbolic arch, and in the eschatological sense a triumphal reading is appropriate. As we saw in Chapter One, scholars have convincingly suggested that the overall theme of the reliefs, the *Parousia,* heralds the Second Coming of Christ, in itself a triumph figured by the 'Prophets and Sibyls' of the third archivolt – and arguably also the 'Proto' figure, if it can indeed be identified as Zachariah – and the ideals of a Christian existence that inform the redemptive process could be said to be symbolised by the 'Labours' and 'Virtues and Beatitudes' below.[29] Yet it is in the 'Trade Reliefs' themselves that the triumphalist message would receive its most

[28] For a similar interpretation, see Pincus 1984; also discussion in Chapter Two.
[29] For the discussion of the identification of the 'Proto', see Chapter One.

unequivocally Venetian stamp. They function as the mirror of a quasi-heroic reality of the paradigmatic urban existence; they endorse the values of the civic collective in a city where religious values were spearheaded by a state-run church. What is more, they tie in the material values of this same governmental organism to the overall political message: that of a just and fair contribution, both in symbolic and financial terms, to a visual statement of Venice's perceived triumph, a supremacy both foreign and domestic in nature.

Political Meaning in the Insula*: The Civic Works of Improvement*

If San Marco was the primary locus for the visual display of Venice's political pretensions, it is also clear that it was just one part a whole carefully calculated to present to both the internal and external viewer a precise reflection of Venice's aspirations. As we saw in Chapter Four, the office of the procuratia was responsible for the commissioning and funding of all works in the *Insula Sancti Marci*, and here the development of the Piazza and Piazzetta is a case in point.

Here it is worthwhile to briefly review the lineaments of the process. Civic works of improvement had already been put into motion in the twelfth century. According to the chronicles, doge Vitale Michiel expanded the original area of the Piazza, and the programme then gained momentum under doge Sebastiano Ziani, who started the renovation of the Ducal Palace, enlarged the Piazza and started the construction of offices for the procurators of San Marco.[30] It was under Ranier Zeno, however, that the most defining steps were taken to crystallise the *Insula*'s identity as a space both sacred and secular in nature. In the mid-1260s, the *brolio* was paved; and as we discussed in Chapter Two, it was probably just a few years earlier that the two

[30] See, for example, BM, *Cronaca di Giovanni Bon*, Cl.7, cod.126, c.97; cited as doc.820 in Cecchetti 1886, p.210. For Ziani's involvement in the Piazza works, see also Schulz 1992-1993, p.151 n.16; Ibid, p.135; Polacco 1994, pp.62-64; Muraro 1981, pp.7-8; Luzzatto 1961, p.21.

massive columns were raised at the Molo and their bases carved with the scenes of urban work that form the parallel cycle to those adorning the main portal itself.[31]

In fact it appears that the Piazzetta sculptures were just as prominent as the 'Trade Reliefs,' arguably even more so. As Schlink points out, when the columns were originally raised their bases were about one metre higher than we see them now, for the Piazzetta floor was more raised than its present level.[32] In this sense, the carvings would not only have reflected the everyday realities of the trades enacted there and their economic contribution to the works of civic improvement commissioned and financed by the procurators on behalf of the state; they would also have formed an important inclusion in the Piazzetta's function as the 'symbolic gateway [of] the city without walls.'[33]

Yet it is the state's formation of the Piazza and Piazzetta as a ritual and functional space that arguably has the most bearing on the discussion of its underlying political motivations. Above we discussed the importance of the concept of *renovatio* on the thirteenth-century decoration of San Marco's west façade; and it seems that a similar interpretation can be applied to the campaign of civic works that took place in the Insula as a whole. Brown and Salvadori, for example, suggest the paving of the Piazza and the refashioning of the Piazzetta was underscored by the desire to directly emulate the twelve surviving fora in Constantinople.[34] The forum, after all, was the most emblematic statement of continuity from the Roman model, and its nature was both of a sacred centrepiece for state power and a functional space for the devolvement of trade and artisan activity. The probability that it was Constantinople that appears to have served as the model, not Imperial Rome, in

[31] See discussion in Chapter Two.
[32] Schlink 1985, p.34.
[33] Brown 1996, p.18.
[34] Ibid; Salvadori 1986, p.39.

itself is revealing.[35] Once more, the political context of Venice's intended supremacy over its former overlord, as well as the presentation of an early Christian heritage, leads us into the territory of a visual proclamation of a triumphalist stand point, of a created ideal rather than the reality that during Ranier Zeno's administration was perceived to be under risk of rupture.

Indeed it may not be coincidental that the centrepiece of this new forum, the giant columns at the Molo, appears to have been modelled on a column Michael Paleologan erected in front of the very church that San Marco was intended to evoke: the Apostoleoion. The reference to Constantinople at precisely the time that the relationship between Venice and the Paleologan administration more tense than serene would have constituted, as Rizzi puts it, '[un] messaggio squisitamente politico.'[36]

Yet here too the symbolism extends beyond that of *renovatio*. Howard points out that 'paired columns were a symbol of justice, by analogy with the two great bronze columns outside the biblical Temple and Palace of Solomon';[37] and the columns of the Piazzetta not only marked the beginning of the ceremonial axis leading from the waterfront to the basilica and the Piazza, but also framed the space dedicated to the ritual enactment of justice in the medieval collective, namely public punishment and executions.[38] Given this function, along with the trading that took place at the Molo and its representation on the column bases, the connection between fair play and justice in the civic collective would certainly have not been lost on the observer.

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[35] For the theory that it was Constantinople, not Rome, that was the referent, see Brown 1996, p.286; Jacoff 1993, p.83; Greenhagh 1990, p.158.
[36] Rizzi 2001, p.53. For the analogy with the Paleologan column by the Apostoleion, see also Ibid, p.25 n.39; Tigler 1999-2000, p.17.
[37] Howard 1993-1994, p.8.
[38] For execution and punishment in the Piazzetta, see Muir 1981, pp.186-188.

It could be added, in fact, that in this sense the bronze statues on top of the columns acquire deeper significance than that of purely arbitrary symbols of the Venetian Republic. The winged lion of St. Mark, which was almost certainly in place by the time of the Great Council decree of 1293 ordering its alteration or repair, may furnish us with certain parallels with the contemporary expansion of the Marcian hagiographical canon, especially the episode of the *praedestinatio*, with its famous utterance of the angel to the Evangelist: "Pax Tibi, Marce Evangelista Meus."[39] Whether or not the bronze lion, in itself a famous item of *spolia*, had the open book that symbolised these words at this time is a moot point.[40] Overall, in fact, what is most significant is the triumphalist notion of the placing of a statue on a column was an act that in its echoes of Constantinopolitan Rome would not have been without weight in the commissioning process.

The statue of St. Theodore, on the other hand, is firmly documented as having been put into position on the adjacent column in 1329, when, as, Demus rather fancifully puts it, 'all danger of his competing with St. Mark had passed.'[41] Instead, though, one could argue that the reinstating of the warrior saint in Venice's hagiographical canon may have constituted a move to underline historical continuity, especially since the first San Marco was built on the site of his shrine.[42] In the early fourteenth-century context, however, it may be more pertinent to interpret Theodore's appearance in the Piazzetta as yet another statement of Venetian ambitions in the Greek East, and this at a time when the Republic's active role there had been progressively eradicated.

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[39] For the decree of 1293, see Cessi 1931, III, p.339; Tigler 1999-2000, p.15-16 n.27; Rizzi 2001, pp.20, 25 n.1; and also discussion in Chapter Four.
[40] Rizzi maintains that the document refers purely to the statue's restoration; Rizzi 2001, I, p.20. Rudt de Collenberg, on the other hand, adheres to the view that it implies the addition of the wings, making it unequivocally the symbol of St. Mark the Evangelist. Rudt de Collenberg 1996, p.288. For an opposing view, see Tigler 1999-2000, pp.19-20.
[41] Demus 1960, p.22.
[42] For the cult of St. Theodore in Venice, see Franzoi 1982, p.75; Muir 1981, pp.93-95; Muraro 1981, pp.7, 11 n.2; Perocco 1979, p.59; Demus 1960, pp.133-134.

These observations, though, merely furnish us with parallels for the politicisation of imagery within the *Insula Sancti Marci*. The central argument, on the other hand, is the both the 'Trade Reliefs' and the Piazzetta carvings take their place within an overall programme of works whose motivation went well beyond the decorative and purely eschatological. The embellishment of the exterior of the basilica interwove a complex web of meaning within which Venice's pretensions could be clearly read: her claim for an apostolic heritage, and her triumphal role in the successes of the Fourth Crusade. Furthermore, the development of the *Insula Sancti Marci* as a civic forum deliberately reprised antique models at a time when Venice's hold in the locus of the living Roman Empire, Constantinople, had started to waver. Within this conceptual climate, the notion of *renovatio* was intended as a quite literal message of status, of durability, and of the prime importance of the overall functioning of the civic collective, the chief construct that underpins the imagery of urban work and workers.

Civic Justice in the Medieval Collective

The political nature of imagery in the *Insula Sancti Marci*, then, appears to have been based on a deliberate frame of reference. Allusions to the Roman Empire of Constantine, Justinian and their successors conferred on Venice the semblance of a rightful and uninterrupted heritage from late antiquity, and furthermore reinforced her apostolic status, as fictive as it may have been, at a time when ideologies were potentially more significant for the formation of the political model than compromised realities.

Within this politically-imbued whole, the 'Trade Reliefs' and Piazzetta sculptures take on greater resonance of meaning. Not only did they project a potent image of

the veracity of Venice's political stability and inviolable constitutional framework; they could also be held to epitomise the idea of *renovatio*. Let us set out the case. Firstly, the decision to represent tradesmen and artisans in guild groups could be considered to relate to the template set by the worker corporations of late antiquity, and certainly the close dialectic between the image of urban activities and the actual locus of their practice displays certain analogies of form, if not of intent, with the trading "badges" constituted by the mosaic floor panels in the Market of the Corporations at Ostia Antica. Secondly, as we saw above, the evocation of late-antique sculpture in the formal approach of the 'Trade Reliefs' places them firmly within the vein of the recreation of an early Christian pedigree, as well as a quasi-heroic sublimination of the concept of manual labour. Here the redemptive message was not only ecclesiastical, but also civic: the guild as the paradigm of collective identity, and one moreover that displayed the all-important continuities from Venice's purported Roman past.

In this sense, of course, the location of the trade sculptures at Venice is deeply symbolic. The Piazzetta columns and their carved bases are positioned at the most crucial entry-point into the sacred and secular forum; and above all the 'Trade Reliefs' are placed on the most important doorway into the basilica. In fact in Venice, where the church was essentially a state-led entity, the meaning of the main portal would have gone beyond the purely ecclesiastical – the earthly prefigurement of the door into the Heavenly Jerusalem – to the secular. In the same way as the Piazzetta columns framed the place of justice, and this in the most stark sense, could the main portal have been imbued with the concept that underpinned the medieval collective as a whole: that of a model of civic justice?

Certainly this concept is a salient part of the imagery both within and without the basilica itself. A mosaic in the Chapel of San Clemente, where the doge himself had

his principal seat within the basilica, constitutes one famous reference.[43] Here, in a scene depicting the solemn reception of the relics of St. Mark into the basilica, the doge is depicted alongside the representative organ of the people, the *consilium sapientes*, which a little later in the century would evolve into the Great Council.[44] To reinforce this vision of earthly concord, an accompanying inscription reads:

> *Dilige iustitiam, sua cuncta reddito iura; / Pauper cum vidua, pupillus et orphanus, o Dux, / Te sibi patronum sperant; pius omnibus esto;/ Non timor aut odium vel amor nec te habeat aurum./ Ut flos casurus, dux es; cineresque futurus, / Et velut acturus, post mortem sic habiturus.*[45]

Here, then, justice is paramount in the doge's dealings with Church and state. The doge's role as protector of widows and orphans – one that would later be passed, it will be remembered, to the procurators of San Marco – was placed within the guiding sphere of acting in the interests of the city's shrine; and the inscription also relates to the oath of office, when the newly-elected doge had to swear to enforce the interests of justice in the civic collective. As Demus points out, in fact, it may not be coincidental that it was at around the same time that the mosaic was produced – the mid-twelfth century – that the first *promissione* was encoded, and furthermore that in their subsequent redactions, the *promissioni* would increasingly emphasise the idea that social justice rested firmly in the orbit of the doge's role as state figurehead.[46]

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[43] For the connection between the Chapel of San Clemente and the doge, see Sinding-Larsen 1993, p.41.
[44] For this identification, see Dale 1994, p.78. For the development of the *consilium* into the Great Council under doge Sebastiano Ziani, see Pertusi 1965, p.10. Hubach tenably proposes that the mosaic's execution around the same time as the establishment of the *consilium sapientes* reflects the latter's status as a 'nuova forza politica determinante.' Hubach 1996, p.379.
[45] For the inscription and its context, see Loechel 1996, p.480; Fasoli 1973, p.286; Demus 1960, p.51.
[46] Demus 1960, p.50 and n.190

The imagery and inscription of the Chapel of San Clemente, then, provides us with a paradigmatic early example of how the notion of civic justice came to bear on the symbolism of San Marco, itself the palladium of civic identity. I would propose, though, that one of the most potent expositions of the idea of the judicial collective could be found in the 'Trade Reliefs' themselves. As we saw in the Introduction to this study, each slab is linked to its neighbours by means of a small carved lion's head, which is often incorporated into the scene of work in an engagingly active manner. In the relief of the shipwrights (*marangoni da nave*) and the caulkers (*calafati*), for example, the lion serves rather uncomfortably as a knee-rest for the master caulker who is concentrated on the boat poised over him; and in that of the cobblers (*calzolai*), the lion's left ear serves as a convenient foothold for the worker seated above. In this way, the inclusion of the lion protomes might appear almost anecdotal: the faces in a rictus of subservience, the manes drawn into the pattern of the foliage that frames and links the separate reliefs.

What, in effect, might the lion heads signify? Tigler, for one, argues that 'la presenza delle protomi leonine è da interpretarsi probabilmente soprattutto in chiave decorativa;'[47] and formally speaking, his argument might have some basis. The protomes have much compositional affinity, for example, with the leonine gargoyles on one of the façades of the Duomo of Modena;[48] and their subsumation into the composition of the sculptures would certainly not make them overtly apparent to the viewer's gaze.

In contrast, other scholars have proposed that the lion protomes could only have been a carefully considered inclusion. Semi, for example, proposes that they are in

[47] Tigler 1995, 1, p.255.
[48] For illustrations of the Modena protomes, see Armandi 1985, p.308.

keeping with the symbolism of the lion's strength, thus evoking 'la forza e l'intelligenza dell'artigianato veneziano.'[49] In contrast, Rizzi argues that they could have some connection to the symbol of St. Mark the Evangelist, and this out with the purely religious sphere. He underlines that the political use of the lion of Mark as the symbol of the Venetian state was already firmly in place by 1261, when the *leone in moleca*, the lion in profile, began to be used on bulls issued by doge Ranier Zeno, although the relatively sparse survival of such documents might indicate that the practice was already in place significantly if not substantially before this date.[50] Rizzi also points out that two grain measures of around the same year, both of which are now held in the state archive, have the symbol embossed onto them.[51] This, in fact, probably suggests that the motif was a seal of governmental endorsement of their dimensions. Could the use of the lion's head in trading containers signify that it was in fact a recognised judicial state symbol, especially since so many of the activities in the 'Trade Reliefs' are depicted with the containers, weights and measures that were subject to the government's approval?

In some ways, this is a seductive theory. If we can regard the 'Trade Reliefs' themselves as a governmental commission, they might tie in quite firmly to contemporary state legislation on the regulation of trade, which as we saw in Chapter Three was just as much motivated by the protection of the interests of consumers as those of the practitioners and their government. It may be, however, that here we run the risk of overinterpretation, for not only do the lion heads not appear in the Piazzetta sculptures, but also the symbol of the lion was a fairly common one within medieval iconography. But can its use at the main portal at the very least be connected to the idea of civic justice? As Verzar Bornstein points out

[49] Semi 1985, p.106.
[50] Rizzi 2001, I, pp.18-19; Rizzi 1981, p.5.
[51] For the grain measures, see Rizzi 2001, pp.18-20 and p.18 fig.2; Tigler 1999-2000, pp.19-20; Rudt de Collenberg 1996, p.289; Rizzi 1981, p.9.

in her study of the reuse of Imperial imagery within the Ghibelline context, the use of lions as the carved supports for church portals was one that effectively reprised the Roman tradition of lions 'as guardians of royal and civic gateways;'[52] and, even more pertinently, Réfice underlines the presence of the symbol of the lion as the *custos iusticie* in Norman dynastic tombs.[53] In these terms, it could well be that the use of the lions' heads in the 'Trade Reliefs' could be read not only as a part of the *renovatio* that underwrote Venice's thirteenth-century visual culture but also a direct reference to the guardianship of the values that underpinned the day-to-day working transactions and activities depicted in the 'Trade Reliefs', with justice not only being inculcated into the guilds' loyalty to the state framework but also due to them from the powers that governed them.

This reading gathers still more momentum if we bear in mind the political circumstances surrounding the production of these images of urban work. While it is likely they were executed within the reign of Ranier Zeno, one must bear in mind that the formation of the constitutional status quo was a process that occupied the duecento as a whole, and that that a similar emphasis on the marrying of civic justice to social concord underscored the policies of Zeno's predecessors Giacomo Tiepolo and Marino Morosini, during whose administrations the portal may, in fact, have been partially or fully planned. Here, of course, the notion of justice within the civic collective would have exerted a constant and potent hold, especially in the subjugation of the city's artisan and tradesmen class to the mores of the mercantile oligarchic model. After all, the social tensions during the dogado of Ranier Zeno and the subsequent intense issue of statutes in 1270 to 1271, which can almost certainly be interpreted as a type of cause-and-effect, would have only reinforced

[52] Verzar Bornstein 1982, p.145. For a comprehensive outline of the imagery of justice, see also Réfice 1996, p.3.
[53] Réfice 1996, p.1.

the need to promote the ideal of justice and civil concord within a political framework in a state of flux.[54]

Conclusions: The Iconography of Urban Work and the Civic Collective

In terms of the concepts discussed in this chapter, the 'Trade Reliefs' and Piazzetta column bases take on a viable conceptual context. The thirteenth-century works at San Marco and in the Piazza and the Piazzetta functioned as the visual proclamation of the very heart of Venice's Myth: that of an inviolable civic collective in the act of declaring a triumphalist message of supremacy. The imagery may not have been explicitly political, but it was superlatively politic. Stylistic and iconographic choices became what Dorigo adroitly defines as 'stratificazioni di senso;'[55] they were subsumed into a complex and deliberate pattern of meaning, and one within which Venice's idea of her own status was succinctly framed.

In these terms, it is somewhat mystifying that the deliberate iconographical programme of the 'Trade Reliefs' and the Piazzetta column bases has not been ascribed a similar meaning. True, the subjects of the sculptures did reflect the urban context, but this was not in the fundamentally simplistic ways usually cited: those of an ecclesiastical re-evaluation of the value of manual labour and a direct connection to the activities that were of the most humble and devotional nature. If the thirteenth-century urban development programme represented a supreme expression of statecraft, the notion of *renovatio* clearly places the west façade of the basilica into the frame of a deeply politicised piece of image making. In these terms, both cycles of sculptures functioned as a visual paradigm of the civic ideal of collective

[54] For the parallels with fifteenth-century Florence, see discussion in Chapter Three.
[55] Dorigo 1990, p.152.

allegiance, as well as harnessing eschatological importance of the Second Coming of Christ and the ecclesiastical acceptance of the value of manual labour to the specific tenets of this most urban of environments.

Taken within this context, the presence of the 'Trade Reliefs' and the cycle that they influenced, the Piazzetta column bases, becomes altogether significant. The message of redemption and the representation of the activities that lay at the foundation of Venice's economy enclosed the subjects of the sculptures, the tradesmen and artisans, within a vision of an urban earthly Jerusalem. The guarantee of the workers' place within it, though, was ultimately bound up within the necessity to honour the political system within which they were so firmly enmeshed. The development of the *Insula Sancti Marci* in the duecento, then, demonstrates that within the process of presenting a triumphal image of the state-led civic collective, ideal and real were deliberately intermeshed.

Conclusion:

The Iconography of Urban Work in Context

In this study, I have argued that the 'Trade Reliefs' of San Marco and the Piazzetta sculptures represent examples of supremely politic image making. Furthermore, the questions that I have posed – when the cycles were executed, by whom, how they were funded and why this particular selection of artisan activities was selected – suggest routes of enquiry that can only be framed within the political circumstances of the time.

Ultimately, the chronology of both cycles reinforces the importance of such a contextual reading. While it could be that the theme of the 'Trade Reliefs' was planned during the reigns of Giacomo Tiepolo and/or Marino Morosini, I have proposed that both cycles were produced within the dogado of Ranier Zeno and that it may have been then, in fact, that the selective principal within the choice of trades to be depicted was fully fashioned. Such a conclusion, of course, can only be speculative; but whatever the case, the outline I have traced of the contemporary political climate suggests that all three administrations were characterised by a clear and cohesive approach to the dynamic between state and workers, with the statutes and laws applied to the guilds revealing just how much the relationship was tipped towards a strict pattern of governmental regulation and control. What is more, I have argued that within this paradigm, the *arti* were placed into a close dialectic with the idea of the civic collective: autonomy was sacrificed for stability, executive clout for the possibility of close participation in civic mores of both a practical and ritual nature. As such, the guilds could attain status through association, not through political participation; and in the *Insula Sancti Marci* this dynamic indicates their role as subjects, not instigators, of the sculptural cycles that depict them.

When examined in this framework, the constructs underlying the patronage of both cycles become substantially easier to decipher. The surviving sources indicate that commissioning processes in the *Insula Sancti Marci* were based on strong continuities, with all works at the basilica and its environs being linked to the office of the procuratia of San Marco. Within the procurators' chief remit, the raising of funds for the *opus*, the affairs of Venice's artisans and tradesmen operated in a close dialectic with their government; and in fact I have suggested that if the subjects of the 'Trade Reliefs' did indeed contribute to the fabric of the basilica, it was in the form of rents, tithes, and the services the *arti* were obliged to provide for the good of the state-led civic collective. As such, the 'Trade Reliefs' and the sculptures of the Piazzetta column bases do not represent a direct artisan donation, let alone one that was self-reflexive and self-reflecting. In contrast, I would propose that they constitute a state commission for state reasons: an acknowledgement of the contribution of the city's artisans and tradesmen not only to the collective weal but also to the very functional realities of financing the extensive civic and decorative works that took place in the *Insula* in the course of the duecento.

If the 'Trade Reliefs' and Piazzetta column bases function as an important exemplum of the iconography of everyday life, the very unusualness of their subject matter has led them to acquire their own art-historical mythology, and this based on an essentially de-politicised set of meanings. In contrast, I would suggest that while cautious parallels can be drawn between the Venetian cycles, the *formelle* of Piacenza Cathedral and the stained glass images of workers at Chartres, the only firm analogies are in form, not in circumstance. At Piacenza, the guild sculptures were almost certainly direct commissions on the behalf of the subjects, stamping their sponsorship on the parts of the cathedral to which they had donated funds. At Chartres, on the other hand, the trade "badges" arguably did not reflect a willing

direction of the guilds' liquid assets but rather of the forced extraction of their work and its proceeds, and this in the context of a volatile political situation. In contrast, in Venice the 'Trade Reliefs' and Piazzetta column bases could be said to represent a policy of mutual acquiescence on behalf of the *arti* and their government. The *arti* may not have directly commissioned the sculptures that depict them, but instead the state made a politic choice to represent their labours in idealised form. This, then, constitutes a governmental acknowledgement, implemented by the procurators, that urban work, both obligated and independent, had commensurable impact on the overall working of a stable civic collective.

Above all, the *Insula Sancti Marci* as a whole was more than just the main spiritual and civic focus of the medieval Republic: it was the focus for the city's image of itself. In these terms, the production of the 'Trade Reliefs' and Piazzetta sculptures takes its place within a total work of urban fashioning. I have proposed, in fact, that the conceptual context for the drive was in itself imbued with political meaning. During the years of confidence bred by the success of the Fourth Crusade, triumphalist imagery reframed Venice as an apostolic and political player, and the impact of the vision would have been particularly resonant in the subsequent period of uncertainty caused by the Paleologan reconquest of Constantinople in 1261, the time, it will be remembered, that the Piazzetta sculptures were in all likelihood executed.

Both cycles, in fact, constitute a symptom of Venice's propaganda making, a drive that placed emphasis on urban identity in a manner designed to be consumed from both within and without. In this sense, not only do the 'Trade Reliefs' and Piazzetta column bases occupy a position of prime symbolic importance; they also go beyond a documentation of the practices of everyday trade to reflect an idealised concept of

a reality required and desired. They are indeed a self-portrait, but rather than being that of their subjects, they function as that of their governmental creators.

In summation, I conclude that the context that produced the 'Trade Reliefs' and the Piazzetta column bases was precise and specific. During the thirteenth century, the long process of ensuring the stability of a merchant oligarchy reached definitive crystallisation. The workers and artisans were allied to this policy by the clear framing of the ideals of civic justice, and their association with the state framework was metaphorically ensured by means of ritual participation in civic processions and the representation of their own contributions towards its workings in the most endurable form: stone.

It is equally clear, though, that the political context of the guilds be viewed in the simplistic terms of oppression or utopia. As Mackenney points out, their world was essentially more complex: 'not the white of the Myth or the black of the Anti-Myth, both of which are static, but instead...a reality on the move.'[1] In these terms, the 'Trade Reliefs' and Piazzetta column sculptures do not reflect an adhesion to reality but a selective departure from it. Like the Myth itself, they were the narrative of an edited response to an ideal. The social unrest in thirteenth-century Venice demonstrates that the paradigm of stability was not a facile trajectory; and it can only be significant that the selection of activities displayed at San Marco in particular appears to have been made in lines with the desire to promote those labours that most firmly underscored the notion of collective allegiance at a time shortly before it was perceived to be at particular risk.

Here it is useful to add one final observation. Given the rigorous enforcement of state regulation during the intense issue of statutes in the early 1270s and the final

[1] Mackenney 1997, p.20.

consolidation of the constitutional framework represented by the *serrata* less than three decades later, it is interesting that the perceived need to politicise the imagery of everyday life apparently passed. In the mid- fourteenth century – around the same time that the Republic began to be dubbed *La Serenissima* – certain of Venice's trades made another appearance in the portico column capitals carved by the workshop of Filippo Calendario in the portico of the Ducal Palace. Amongst allegories of the fight between good and evil, the 'Liberal Arts' and allegories of justice, we find a stone-cutter, a goldsmith, a cobbler, a carpenter a measurer, a farmer, a notary and a smith **(fig.108)**.[2] By now, though, the frame is that of the pre-established convention of the mechanical arts within the context of encyclopaedic imagery, with the closest analogies being presented by near-contemporary cycles such as those at the Palazzo della Ragione in Padua and the *campanile* of the Duomo in Florence.[3] In contrast to the 'Trade Reliefs' and the Piazzetta sculptures of just under a century before, the Ducal Palace images of work and workers have been devoided of their political content to become generic expressions of the value of manual labour in the wider sphere of all facets of human existence.

In short, the history of urban iconography is essentially the history of the trade guilds. It is also a history in need of comprehensive revision. Each instance of these images of manual work are indissolubly context-specific; and at San Marco and the Piazzetta, the cycles of sculptures showing the trades of the medieval collective reflect the institutionalisation of a solid political balance. While this constitutional hold on the affairs of the *arti* may not have permitted them to act as patrons at this point in their history, the images within the 'Trade Reliefs' and Piazzetta column bases gave a symbolic and visible recognition of their contribution to the successful

[2] See Manno 1999, pp.106-107; Šebesta 1996, p.207; Polacco 1994, p.65; Lieberman 1991, p.119; Wolters 1976, p.173 (cat.48).
[3] For Padua, see Mor 1964. For the *campanile* at Florence, see Trachtenburg 1971, pp.85-108.

functioning of the state paradigm. In this sense, the simulacrum of civic participation could operate just as effectively as its reality.

In these terms, the 'Trade Reliefs' and Piazzetta column bases epitomise the most defining state trajectory in the thirteenth-century development of the *Insula Sancti Marci*: the manipulation of meaning for political purposes. These extraordinary images do indeed signal a shift in attitude towards the workers of the medieval city. At the same time, however, they demonstrate that there is a gulf between the act of representation and the act of being represented.

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BAV – Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vatican City
BC – Biblioteca del Museo Correr, Venice
BL – British Library, London
BM – Biblioteca Marciana, Venice

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ILLUSTRATIONS

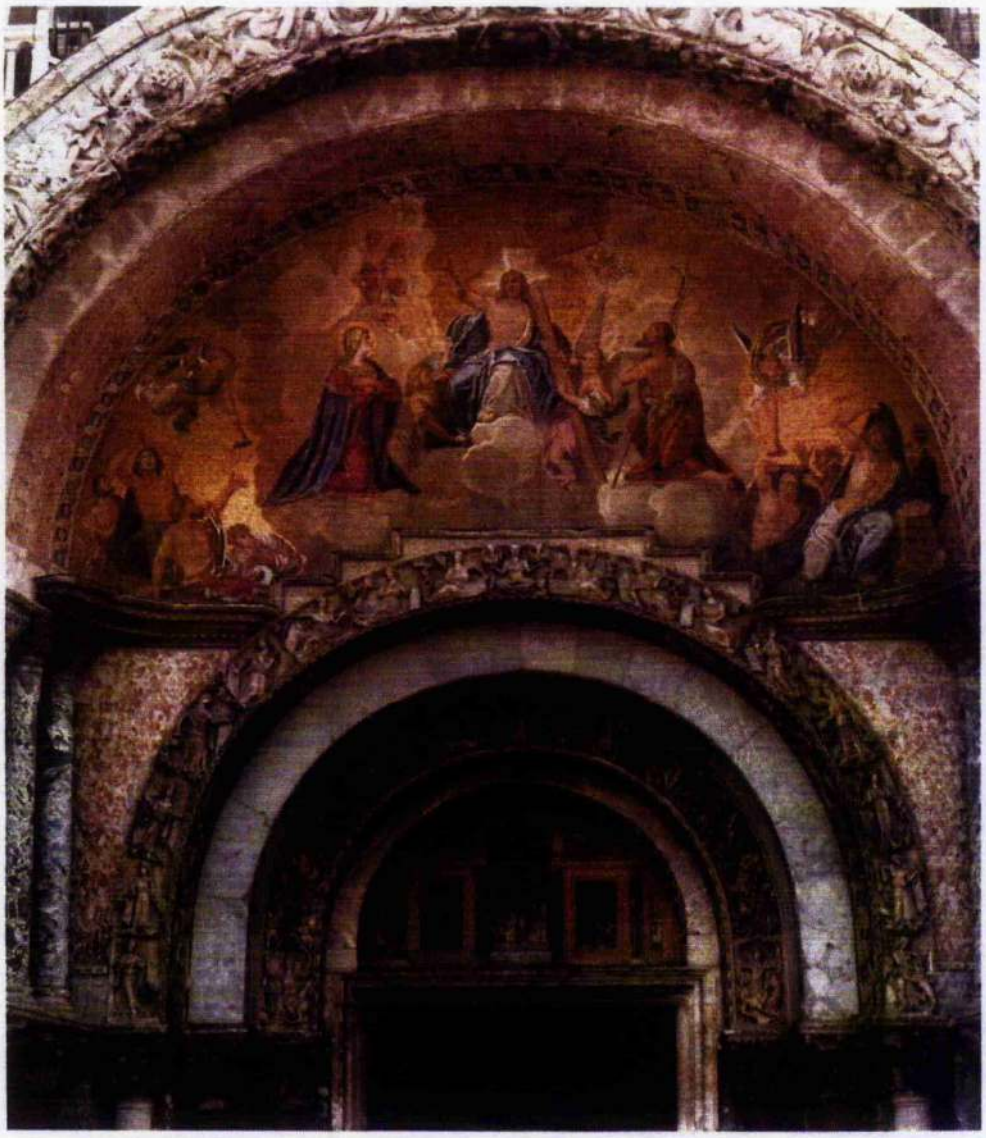

Fig.1. Venice, San Marco, West Façade: Main Portal and Parousia Lunette Mosaic

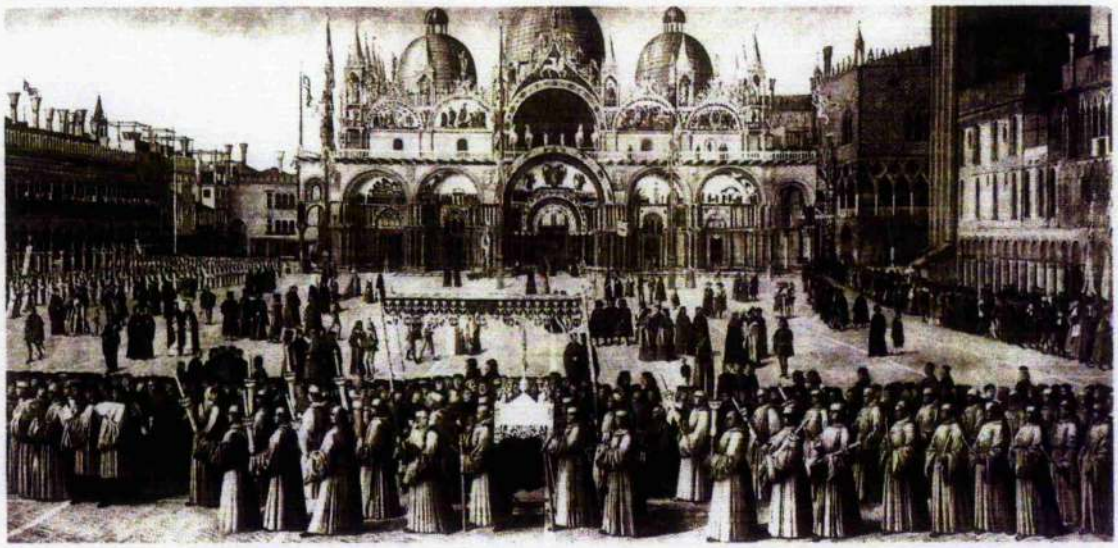

Fig.2. Gentile Bellini: Procession in Piazza San Marco, 1496
oil on canvas, Venice Galleria dell'Accademia

Fig.3. Venice, San Marco, West Façade, Main Portal, Intrados of First Archivolt, Marble Relief Slab: Samson and the Lion, Personification of Luxury

Fig.4. Venice, San Marco, West Façade, Main Portal, Extrados of First Archivolt, Marble Relief Slab: Man fighting Lion, Fighting Bears

Fig.5. Venice, San Marco, West Façade, Main Portal, Extrados of First Archivolt, Marble Relief Slab: Boy and Teacher

Fig.6. Venice, San Marco, West Façade, Main Portal, Extrados of First Archivolt, Marble Relief Slab: Woman being Whipped, Woman serving Wine

Fig.7. Venice, San Marco, West Façade, Main Portal, Intrados of Second Archivolt, Marble Relief Slab: January

Fig.8. Venice, San Marco, West Façade, Main Portal, Intrados of Second Archivolt, Marble Relief Slab: February

Fig.9. Venice, San Marco, West Façade, Main Portal, Intrados of Second Archivolt, Marble Relief Slab: March

Fig.10. Venice, San Marco, West Façade, Main Portal, Intrados of Second Archivolt, Marble Relief Slab: April

Fig.11. Venice, San Marco, West Façade, Main Portal, Intrados of Second Archivolt, Marble Relief Slab: May

Fig.12. Venice, San Marco, West Façade, Main Portal, Intrados of Second Archivolt, Marble Relief Slab: June

Fig.13. Venice, San Marco, West Façade, Main Portal, Intrados of Second Archivolt, Marble Relief Slab: July

Fig.14. Venice, San Marco, West Façade, Main Portal, Intrados of Second Archivolt, Marble Relief Slab: August

Fig.15. Venice, San Marco, West Façade, Main Portal, Intrados of Second Archivolt, Marble Relief Slab: September

Fig.16. Venice, San Marco, West Façade, Main Portal, Intrados of Second Archivolt, Marble Relief Slab: October

Fig.17. Venice, San Marco, West Façade, Main Portal, Intrados of Second Archivolt, Marble Relief Slab: November

Fig.18. Venice, San Marco, West Façade, Main Portal, Intrados of Second Archivolt, Marble Relief Slab: December

Fig.19. Venice, San Marco, West Façade, Main Portal, Extrados of Second Archivolt, Marble Relief Slab: Compunction

Fig.20. Venice, San Marco, West Façade, Main Portal, Extrados of Second Archivolt, Marble Relief Slab: Fortitude

Fig.21. Venice, San Marco, West Façade, Main Portal, Extrados of Third Archivolt, Marble Relief Slab: Sibyl

Fig.22. Venice, San Marco, West Façade, Main Portal, Extrados of Third Archivolt: Prophet

Fig.23. Venice, San Marco, West Façade, Main Portal, Intrados of Third Archivolt, Marble Relief Slab: 'Proto'

Fig.24. Venice, San Marco, West Façade, Main Portal, Intrados of Third Archivolt, Marble Relief Slab: Caulkers and Boat-makers
(calafati and marangoni da nave/carpentieri/falegnami da nave)

Fig.25. Venice, San Marco, West Façade, Main Portal, Intrados of Third Archivolt, Marble Relief Slab: Vintners (vinai or travasadori/portadori de vin)

Fig.26. Venice, San Marco, West Façade, Main Portal, Intrados of Third Archivolt, Marble Relief Slab: Breadsellers and Fishsellers (panattaroli and pescivendoli)

Fig.27. Venice, San Marco, West Façade, Main Portal, Intrados of Third Archivolt, Marble Relief Slab: Butchers and Oil and Fat sellers (macellai/becheri and terneri)

Fig.28. Venice, San Marco, West Façade, Main Portal, Intrados of Third Archivolt, Marble Relief Slab: Dairy sellers (pestrineri/lattai)

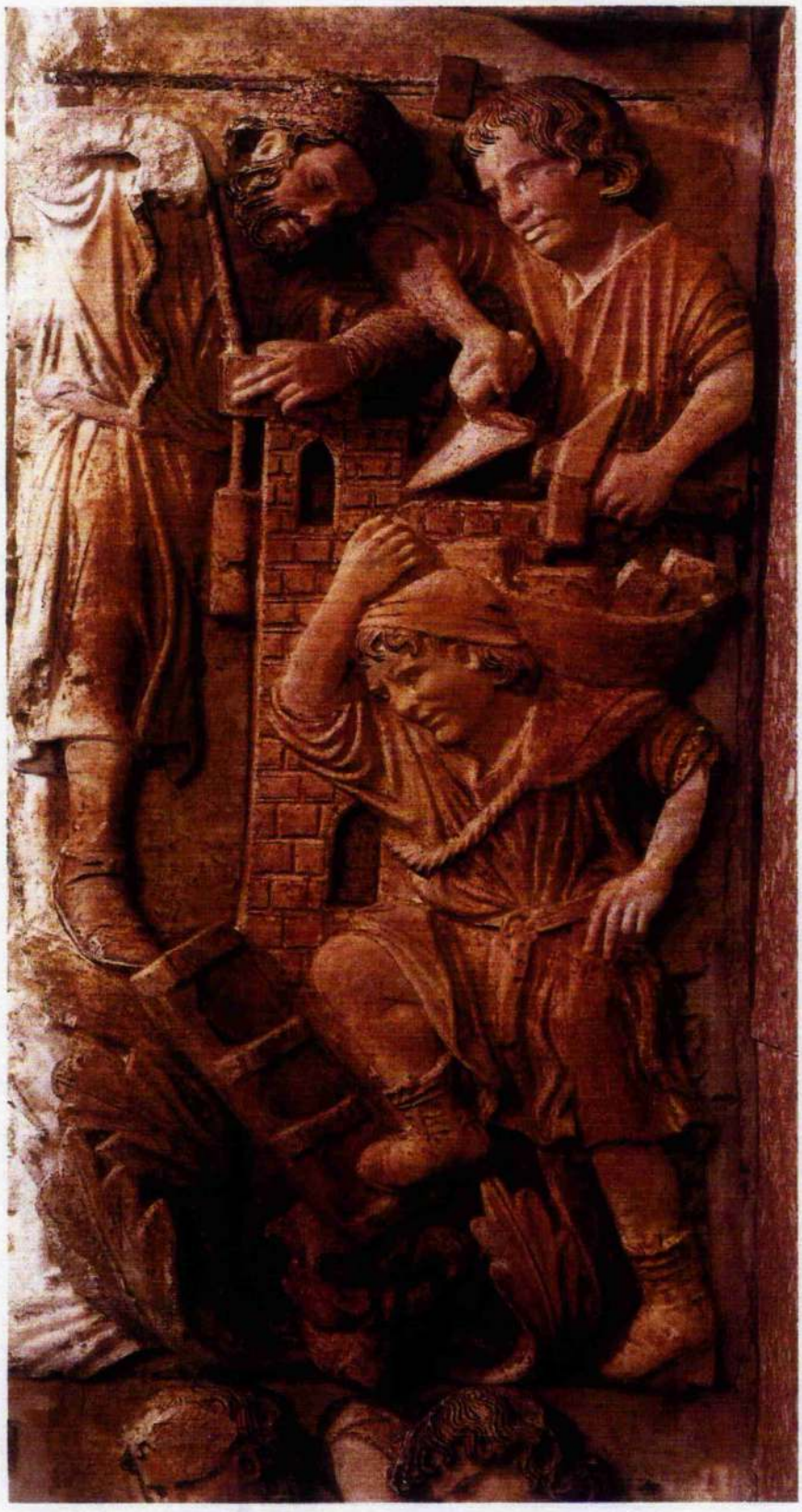

Fig.29. Venice, San Marco, West Façade, Main Portal, Intrados of Third Archivolt, Marble Relief Slab: Builders (muratori/mureri)

Fig.30. Venice, San Marco, West Façade, Main Portal, Intrados of Third Archivolt, Marble Relief Slab: Agnus dei

Fig.31. Venice, San Marco, West Façade, Main Portal, Intrados of Third Archivolt, Marble Relief Slab: Cobblers (calzolai/calegheri)

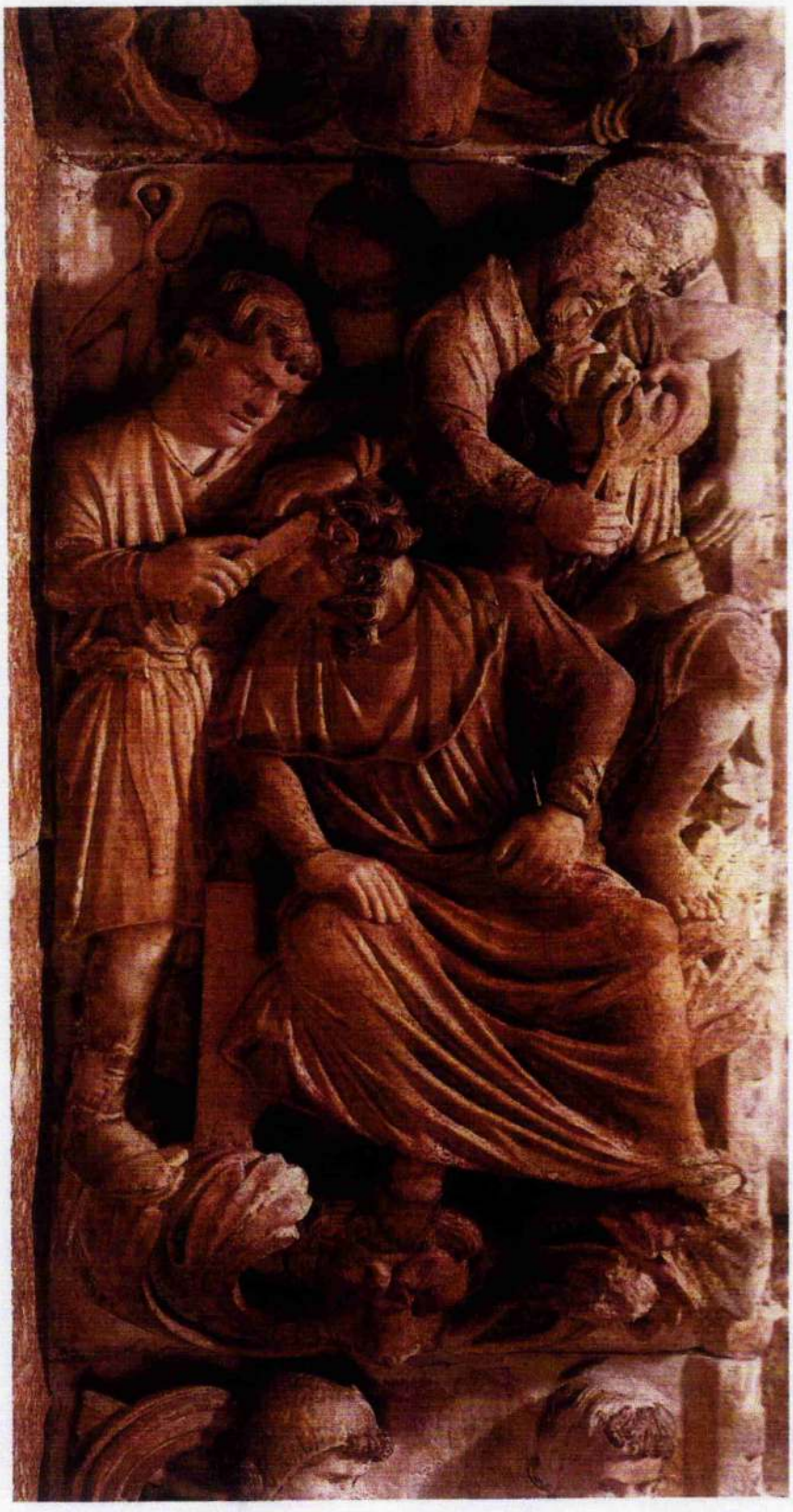

Fig.32. Venice, San Marco, West Façade, Main Portal, Intrados of Third Archivolt, Marble Relief Slab: Barbers and Dentists (barbieri e dentisti)

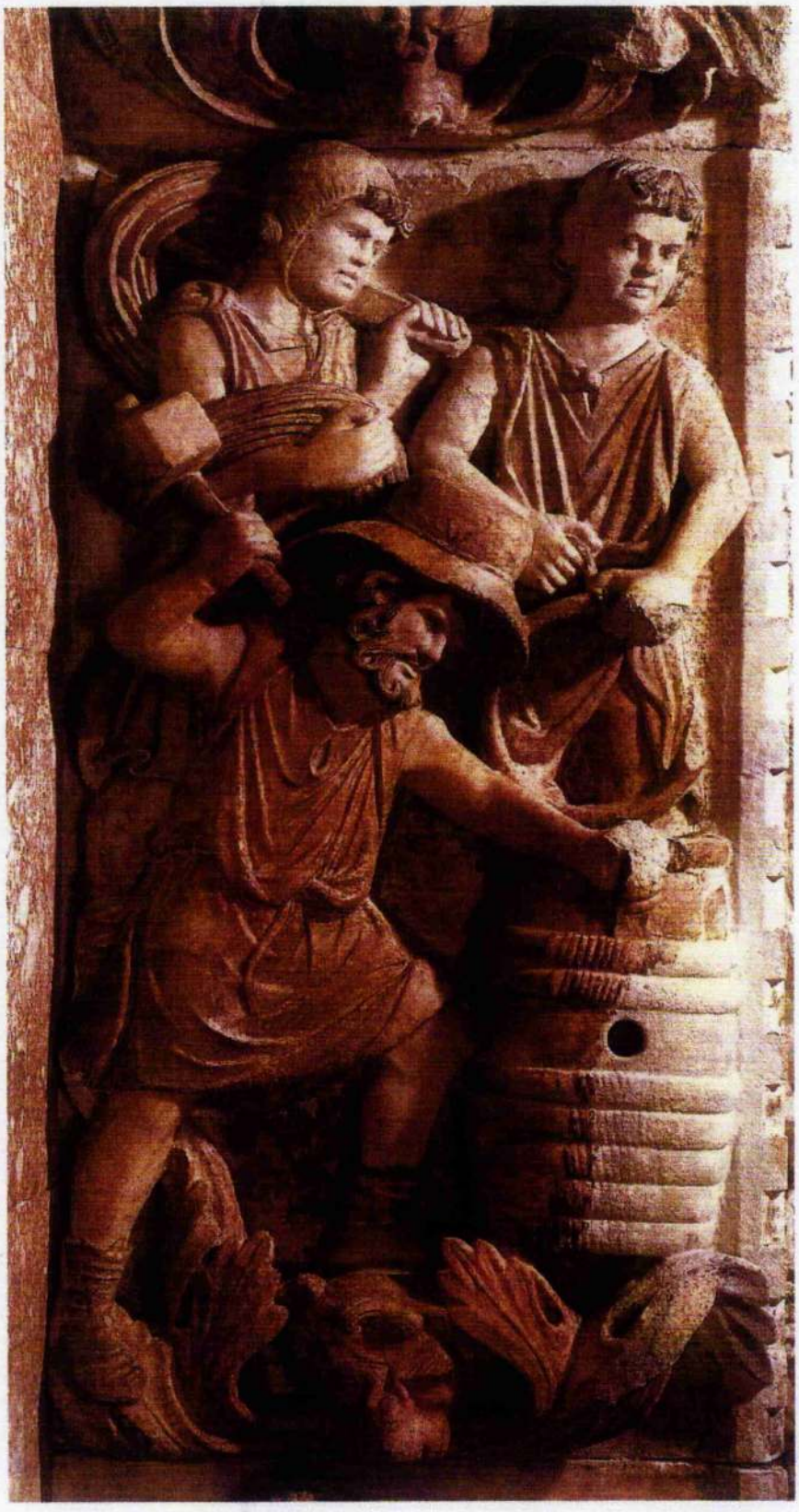

Fig.33. Venice, San Marco, West Façade, Main Portal, Intrados of Third Archivolt, Marble Relief Slab: Coopers and Barrel hoop makers (bottai/botteri and cerchai/cerchieri)

Fig.34. Venice, San Marco, West Façade, Main Portal, Intrados of Third Archivolt, Marble Relief Slab: Carpenters (magistrorum domorum/marangoni da casa/falegnami)

Fig.35. Venice, San Marco, West Façade, Main Portal, Intrados of Third Archivolt, Marble Relief Slab: Sawyers (segadori)

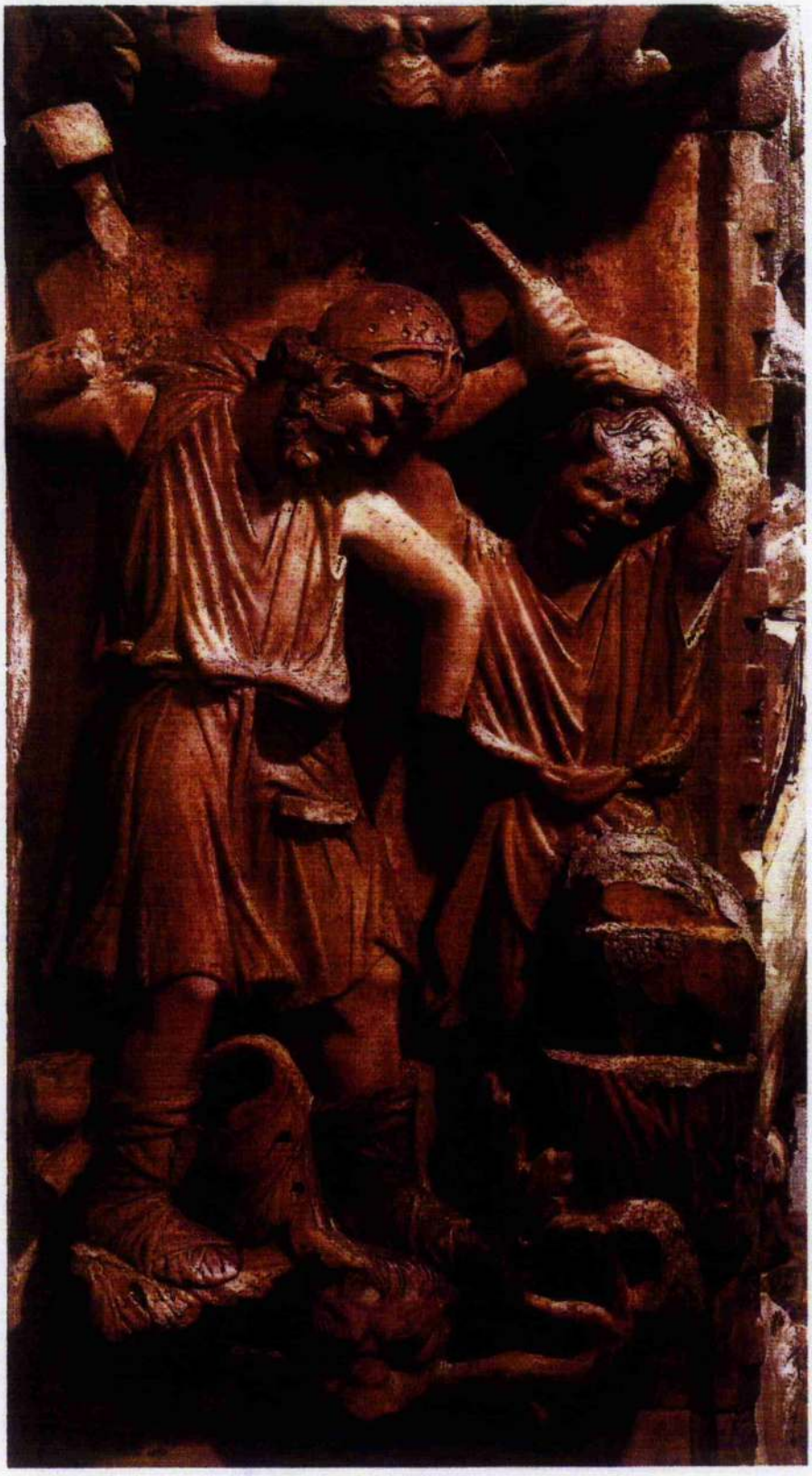

Fig.36. Venice, San Marco, West Façade, Main Portal, Intrados of Third Archivolt, Marble Relief Slab: Blacksmiths (fabbri)

Fig.37. Venice, San Marco, West Façade, Main Portal, Intrados of Third Archivolt, Marble Relief Slab: Fishermen (pescatori)

Fig.38. Venice, Piazzetta Columns

Fig 39. Venice, Piazzetta, Column of St.Theodore, Column Base,
Relief in Istrian Stone: Blacksmiths (fabbri)

Fig 40. Venice, Piazzetta, Column of St.Theodore, Column Base,
Relief in Istrian Stone: Fishsellers (pescivendoli)

Fig41. Venice, Piazzetta, Column of St.Theodore, Column Base,
Relief in Istrian Stone: Breadsellers (panattaroli)

Fig.42 .Venice, Piazzetta, Column of St.Theodore, Column Base, Relief in Istrian Stone:
Winesellers or Dairy Sellers (vignai or pestrineri/lattai)

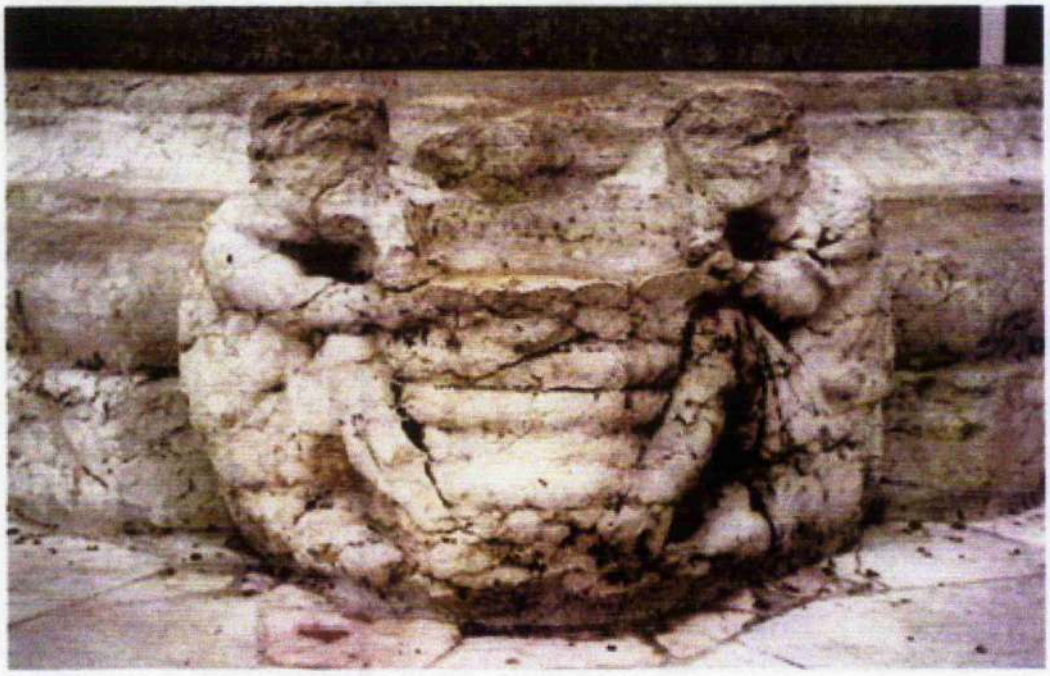

Fig. **43**.Venice, Piazzetta, Column of St.Mark, Column Base,
Relief in Istrian Stone: Fruitsellers (erbaroli)

Fig. **44**. Venice, Piazzetta, Column of St.Mark, Column Base,
Relief in Istrian Stone: Butchers (macellai/becheri)

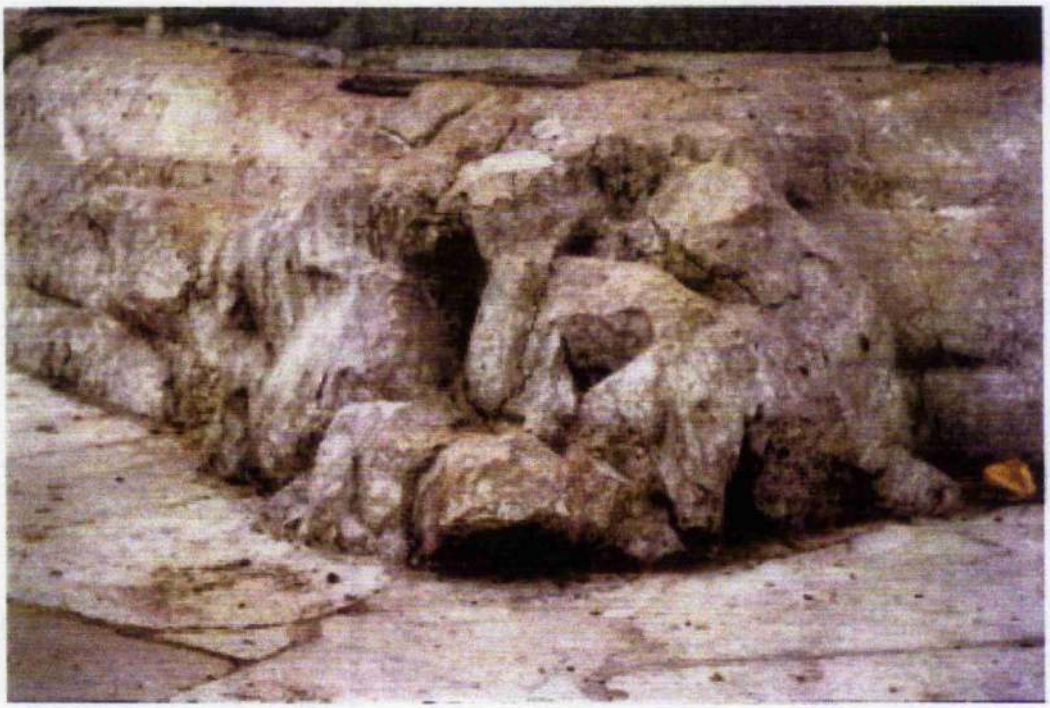

Fig45. Venice, Piazzetta, Column of St.Mark, Column Base, Relief in Istrian Stone: Unidentifiable Trade (animal sellers?)

Fig. 46. Venice, Piazzetta, Column of St.Mark, Column Base, Relief in Istrian Stone: Unidentifiable Trade

Fig. 47. Piacenza, Cathedral, Nave,
Marble Relief Slab on Pier: Bakers

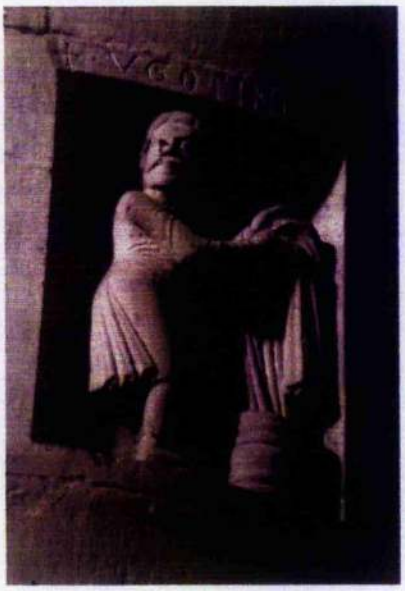

Fig. 48. Piacenza, Cathedral, Nave,
Marble Relief Slab on Pier:
Dyer (Ugo Tinctor)

Fig. 49. Piacenza, Cathedral, Nave, Marble Relief Slab
on Pier: Wheelwright (Iohannes Cacainsolario)

Fig. 50. Piacenza, Cathedral, Nave,
Marble Relief Slab on Pier: Drapers

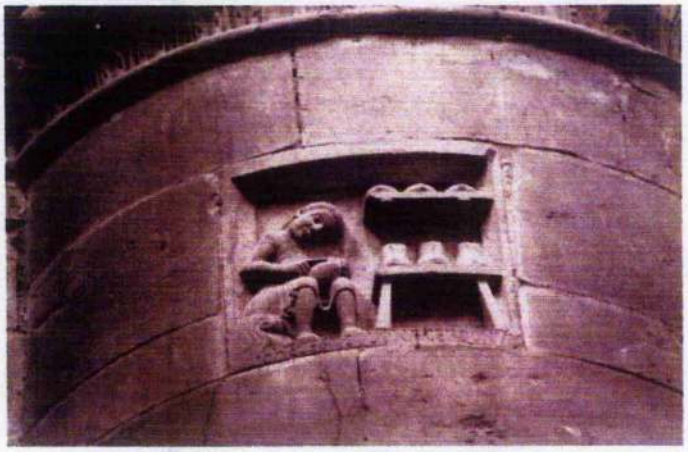

Fig.51. Piacenza, Cathedral, Nave,
Marble Relief Slab on Pier: Cobblers

Fig.52. Piacenza, Cathedral, Nave,
Marble Relief Slab on Pier: Cordwainers

Fig.53. Piacenza, Cathedral, Nave,
Marble Relief Slab on Pier: Furriers

Fig.54. Piacenza, Cathedral, Nave,
Marble Relief Slab on Pier: Donor Couple

Fig.55. Lodi, Cathedral, Nave, Marble Relief Slab
on Pier: Donor Couple

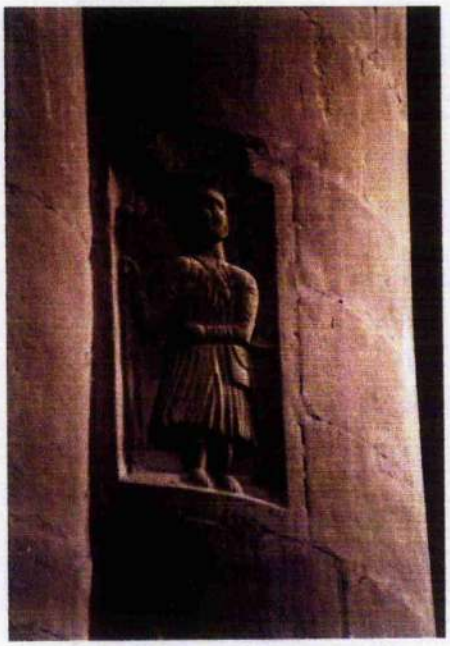

Fig. 56. Piacenza, Cathedral, Nave,
Marble Relief Slab on Pier: Pilgrim

Fig 57. Chartres, Cathedral, Window of St.James
Bay 73, Stained Glass: Wool Merchants

Fig 58. Chartres, Cathedral, Window of St.Lubinus
Bay 63 panel 1, Stained Glass: Wine Crying

Fig.59. Trogir, Cathedral, Main Façade,
Main Portal, Right Pilaster,
Marble Relief Slab: March

Fig.60. Venice, San Marco, West Façade,
Main Portal, Intrados of Second Archivolt,
Marble Relief Slab: March

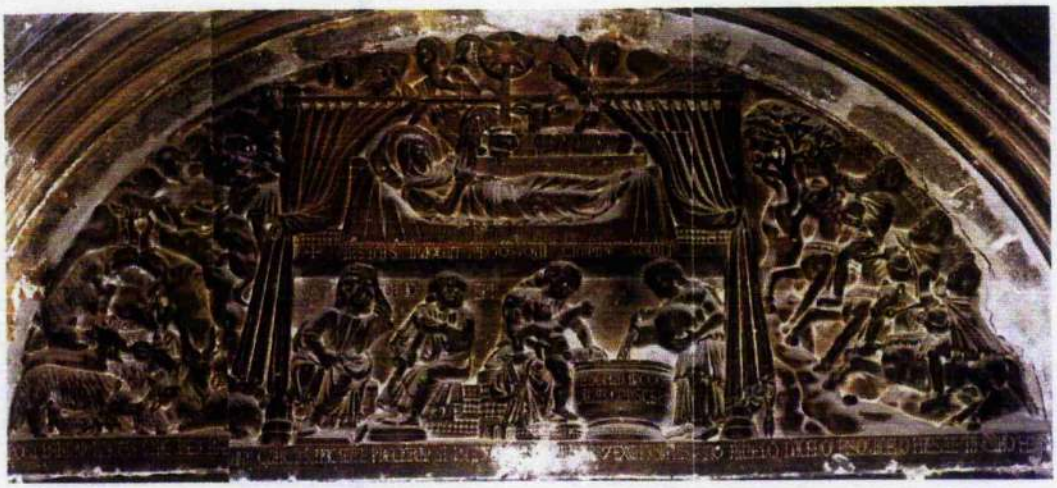

Fig. 61. Trogir, Cathedral, Main Façade, Main Portal, Lunette, Marble Relief: Nativity

Fig.62. Trogir, Cathedral, Main Façade, Main Portal, Left Pilaster, Marble Relief Slab: January, February

Fig.63. Trogir, Cathedral, Main Façade, Main Portal, Right Pilaster, Marble Relief Slab: March, April

Fig.64. Trogir, Cathedral, Main Facade, Main Portal, Lunette Archivolt Marble Relief Slab: Dream of Joseph

Fig. 65. Venice, San Marco, North Façade, Porta dei Fiori,
Marble Relief: Nativity and Spandrel Angels

Fig. 66. Trogir, Cathedral, Main Façade,
Main Portal, Left Columnette,
Marble Relief: Inhabited Frieze

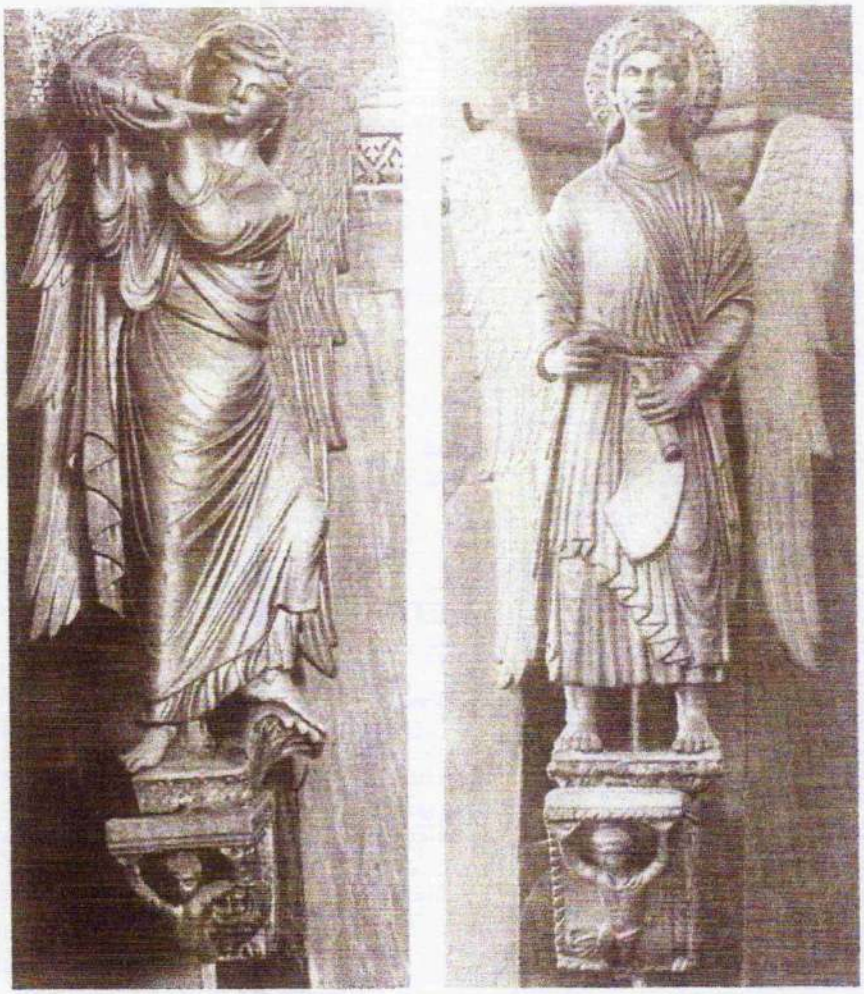

Fig. 67. Venice, San Marco, Interior, Crossing, Free-Standing Marble Sculptures: Angels

Fig. 68. Trogir, Cathedral, Main Façade, Main Portal, Far Left Pilaster, Marble Relief Slab: Evangelists

Fig. 69. Venice, San Marco, Interior, South Aisle, Marble Sculptures: Protome Heads

Fig. 70. Venice, San Marco, West Façade, Porta Sant'Alipio: Lunette Mosaic

Fig.71a.Ferrara, Museo della Cattedrale,
Marble Relief Slab: March

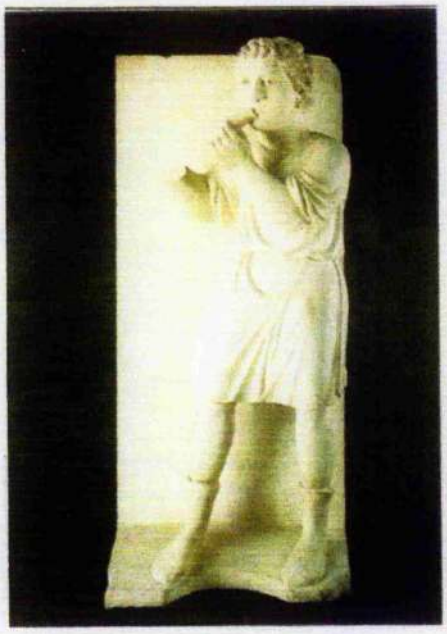

Fig.71b.Parma, Baptistery, Interior,
Marble Relief Slab: March

Fig. 72. Venice, San Marco, West Façade, Main Portal, Lunette Niche,
Free-Standing Marble Sculpture: Dream of Joseph

Fig.73. Venice, San Marco, Interior, South Transept, Mosaic: Apparitio of St.Mark

Fig. 74. Herzog August Bibliothek, Cod.Guelf.61.2 Augusteus 4o (Musterbuch ofWolfenbüttel), fol.89r: The Evangelists John and Matthew

Fig. 75. Trogir, Cathedral, Main Façade,
Main Portal, Lunette Archivolt,
Marble Relief Slab: Annunciate Virgin

Fig. 76. Trogir, Cathedral, Main Façade, Main Portal,
Marble Sculpture: Left Telamon

Fig 77. Trogir, Cathedral, Main Façade, Main Portal, Lunette Archivolt,
Marble Relief Slab: Dream of Joseph

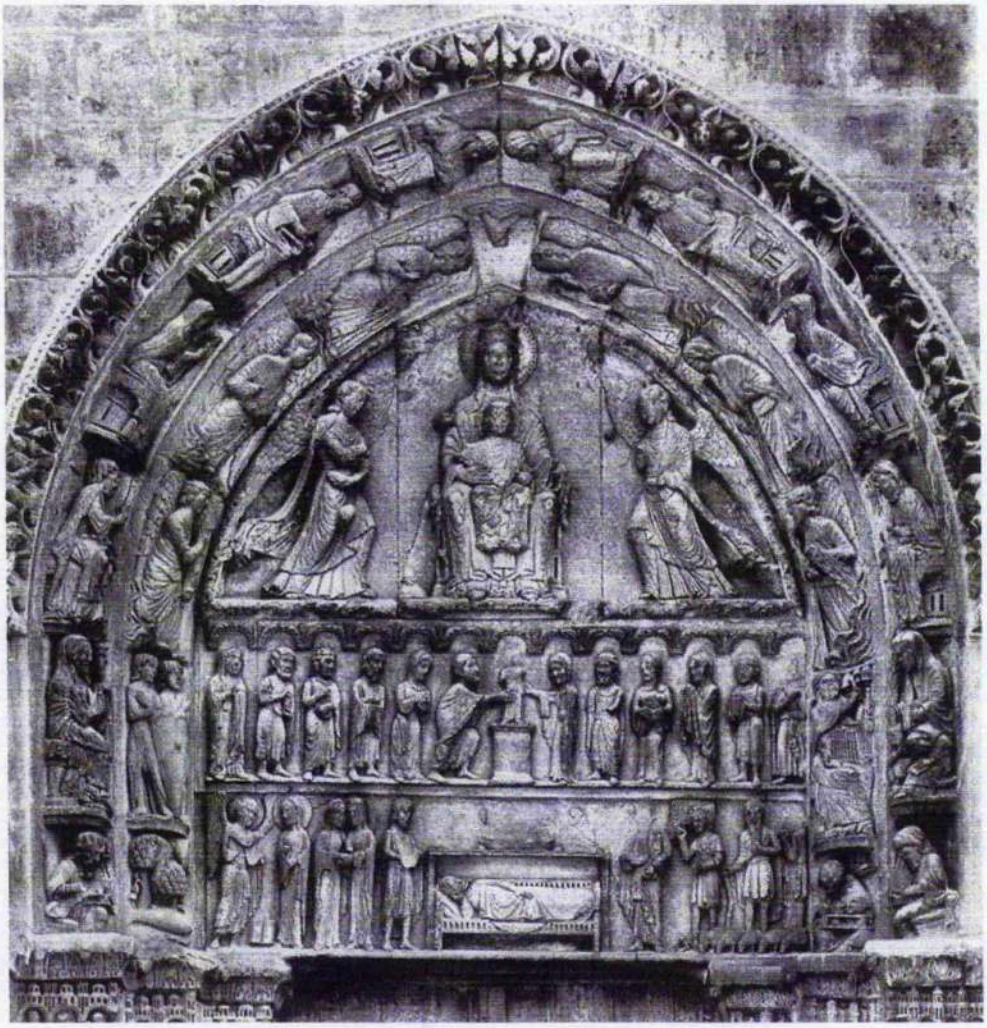

Fig.78. Chartres, Cathedral, North Transept, Left Portal,
Tympanum, Marble Relief: Nativity

Fig.79.Amiens, Cathedral, West Portal, Socle of Right Jamb: Zodiac and Calender: February (middle lower)

Fig. 80. Parma, Baptistery, Typanum, Marble Relief Slab: Annunciate Virgin

Fig. 81. Trogir, Cathedral, Interior, Ciborium,
Marble Sculpture: Angel

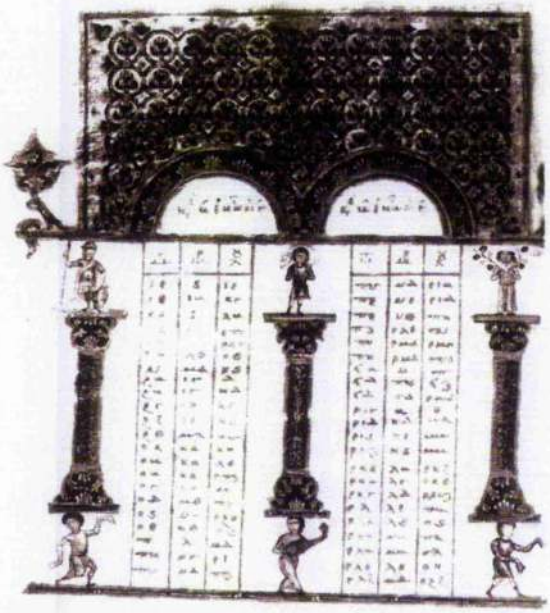

Fig. 82. Biblioteca Marciana, Ms.BM gr.Z 540
(Marcian Evangeliary), fol.3v: March, April, May

Fig.83a.Venice, San Marco, West Façade,
Upper Level, Marble Relief: St.George

Fig.83b.Venice, San Marco, West Façade,
Upper Level, Marble Relief: St.Demetrius

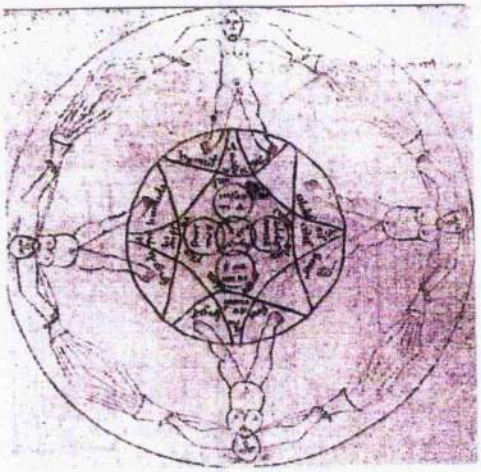

Fig.84. Dijon, Bibliothèque Municipale,
Ms.448, fol.80r.: Rose des Vents

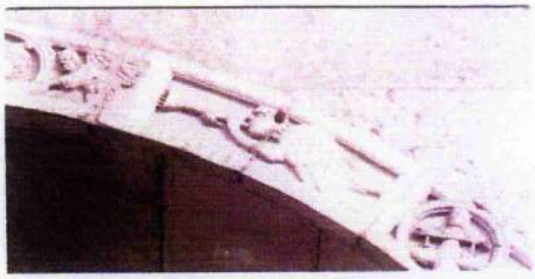

Fig.85. Piacenza, Cathedral, Main Façade,
Main Portal, Marble Relief Slab: Auster

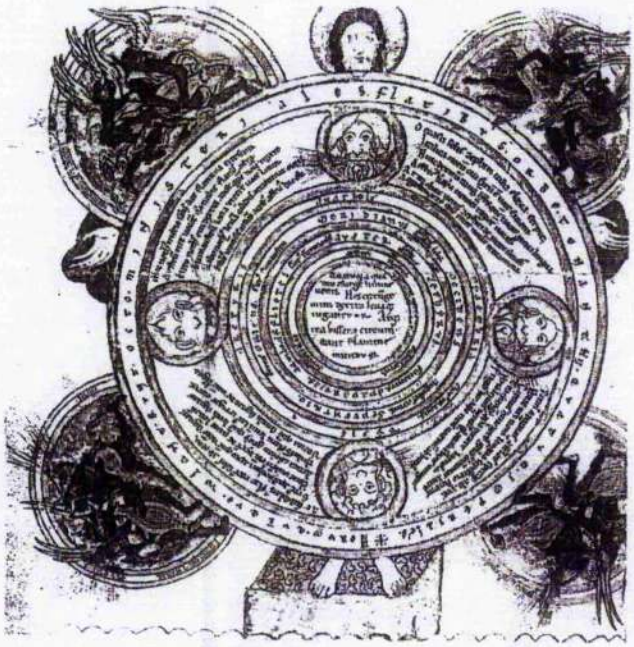

Fig.86. Vienna, Österreischische National Bibliothek,
Ms.cod.378, fol.1v: Rose des Vents

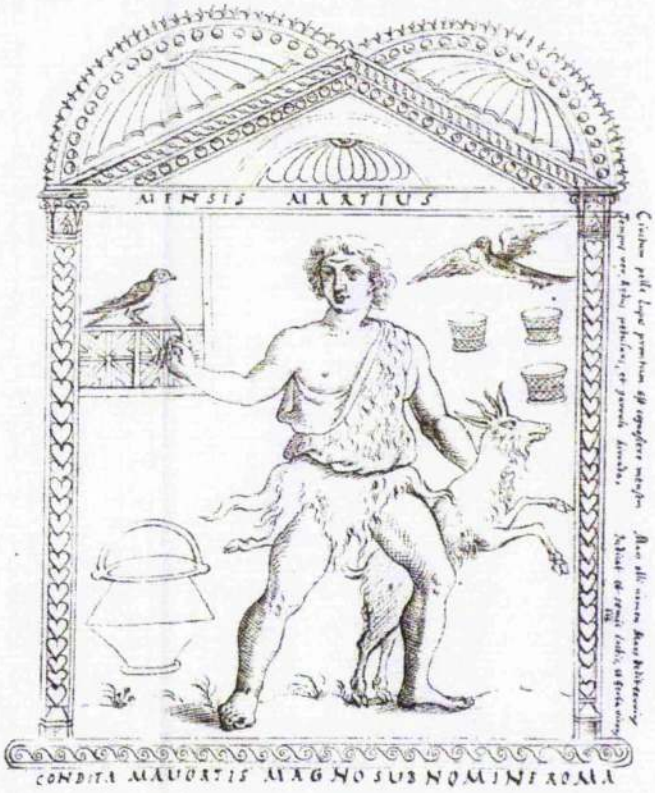

Fig.87. Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Ms.Barb.lat.2154
(Copy of Chronograph of 354), fol.18: March

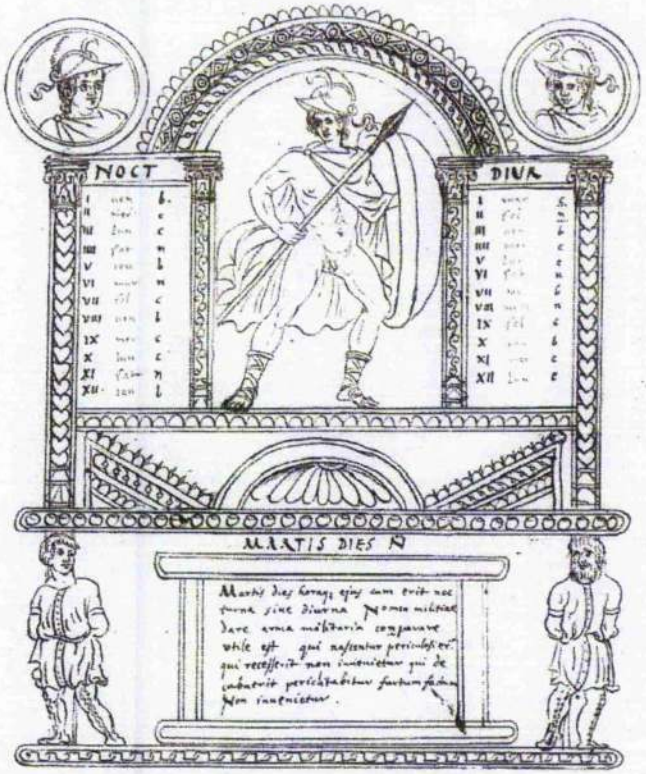

Fig.88. Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Ms.Barb.lat.2154
(Copy of Chronograph of 354), fol.9: Mars

Fig.89. Argos, Villa of the Hunter,
Floor Mosaic: March

Fig.90. Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana,
Ms.Vat.gr.1291 (Vatican Ptolemy) fol.9r: Months

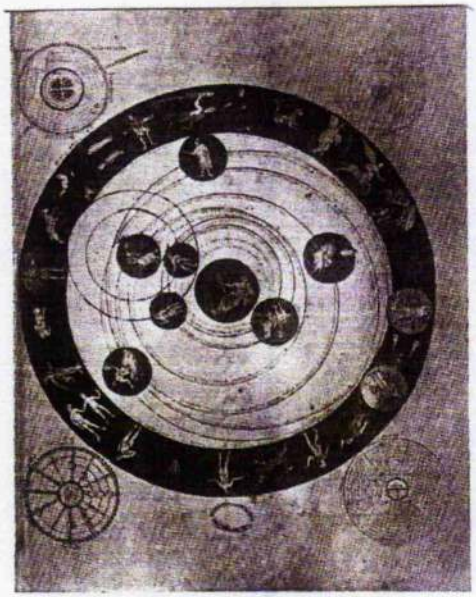

Fig.91. Boulogne-sur-Mer, Bibliothèque
Municipale, Ms.188 fol.30r: Planetary Spheres

Fig.92. Vienna, Österreischische
National Bibliothek, Ms.Cod.387, f.90v:
Vienna Calendar

Fig.93. British Library, Ms.Landsdowne 383
(Shaftesbury Psalter) fol.4: March

Fig. 94. Moscow Historical Museum, Ms.Add.Gr.129
(Chludov Psalter), fol.35v: Patriarch
Iannis and Demon

Fig.95. Gerona, Cathedral, Creation Tapestry: March

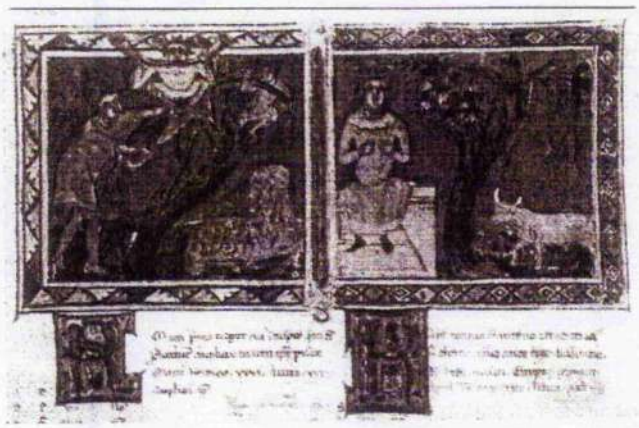

Fig.96. Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Ms.Vat.Lat.4363, fol.110r: March

Fig.97. Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Ms.Vat.reg.lat.1283
fol.28v: Sphere of Mars

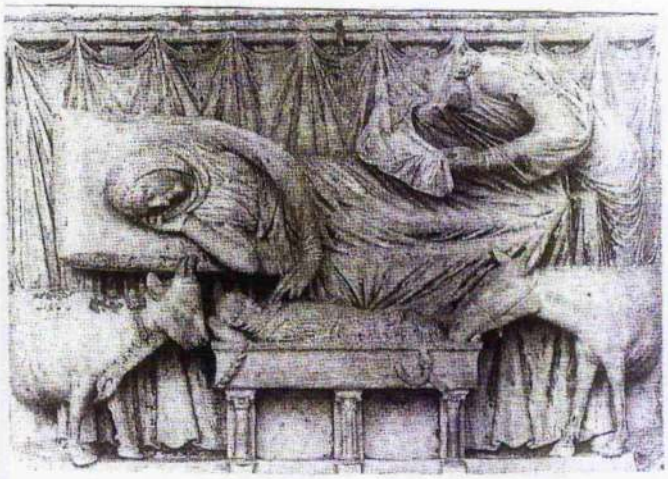

Fig.98. Chartres, Cathedral, Choir Screen
Marble Relief: Nativity

Fig.99. Paris, Notre-Dame, West Portal,
Central Doorway, Socle Jambs,
Marble Relief: Virtues and Vices

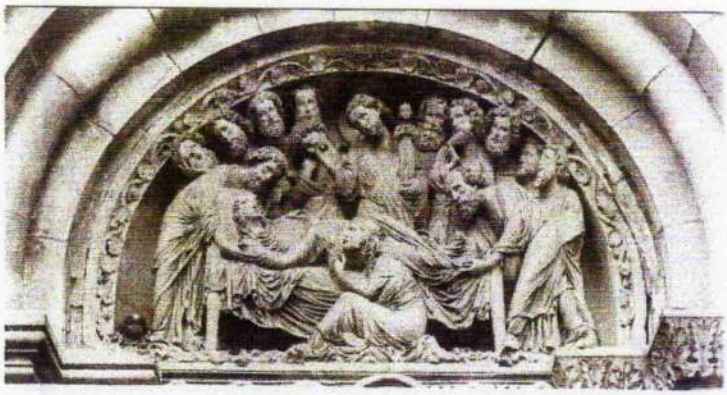

Fig.101.Strasbourg, Cathedral, South Transept, West Portal, Tympanum,
Marble Relief: Death of the Virgin

Fig. 100.Villard de Honnecourt, sketchbook: Humility

Fig.102. Paris, Notre-Dame, West Portal,
Marble Relief: Story of Job

Fig.103. Freiberg, Cathedral, Goldene Pforte,
Free-Standing Marble Sculpture: Daniel

Fig.104. Reims, Cathedral, External Facing, Marble Sculptures: Corbel Heads

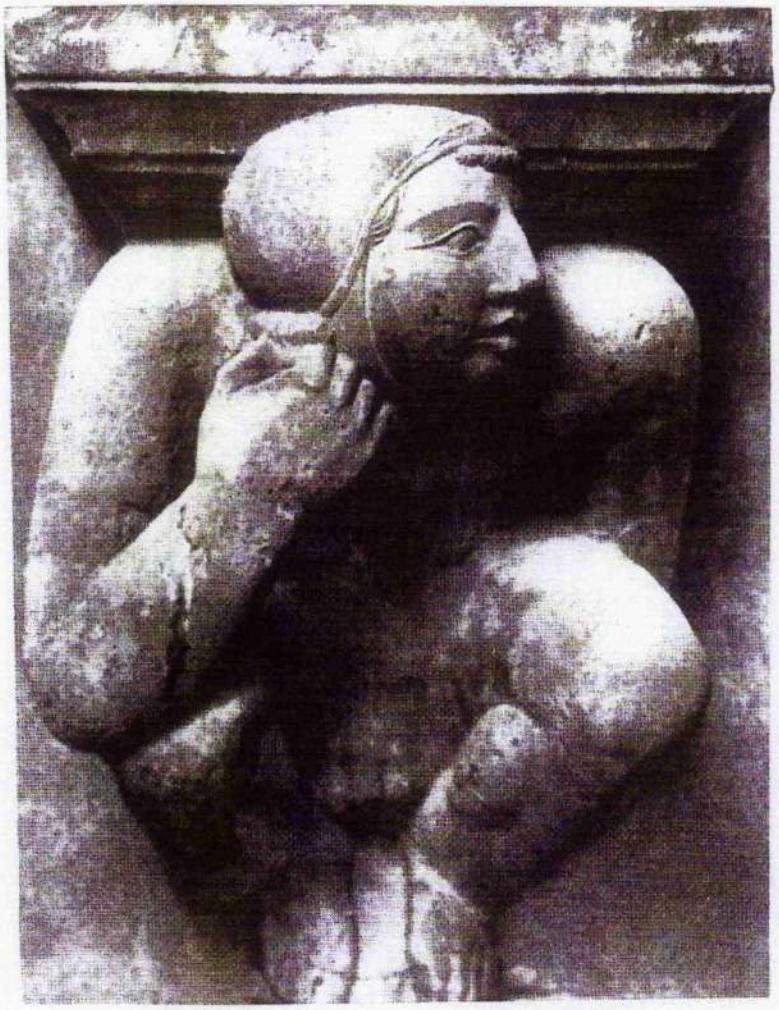

Fig.105. Castel del Monte, Stair Vaulting,
Marble Sculpture, Corbel Figure

Fig.106. Workshop of Arnolfo di Cambio, Perugia, Fountain Fragment, Marble Sculpture, Male Figure

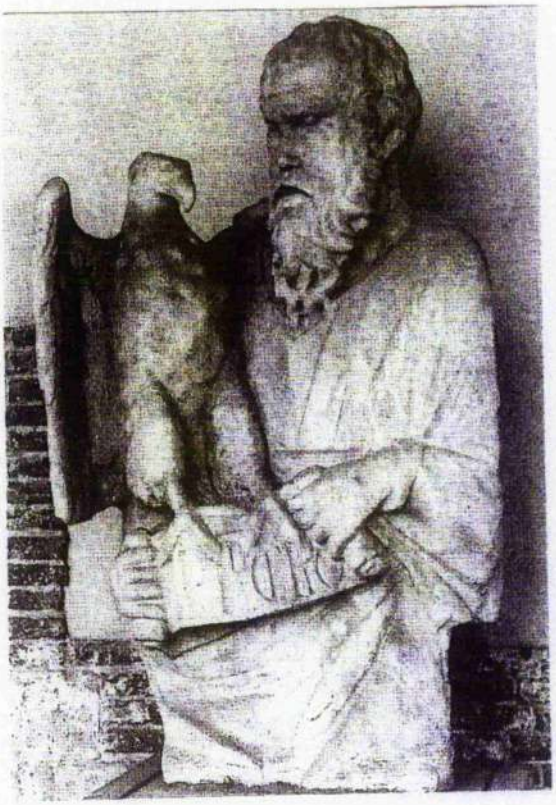

Fig.107. Workshop of Nicola Pisano, Pisa Baptistery, Pinnacles, Marble Sculpture: St.John the Evangelist

Fig.108. Workshop of Filippo Calendario,
Venice, Ducal Palace, Portico,Marble Column Capital,
(reproduction of original): Blacksmith